

Cambridge Libraries Scrapbook 1897 to 2016

Facts, Features and (occasional) Fallacies
reported in Cambridge Newspapers
summarised by

Mike Petty

Most of these stories originally appeared in the Cambridge Daily/Evening/News or the
Cambridgeshire Weekly News, its sister title.

They are supplemented by some articles published in the
Cambridge Independent Press or Cambridge Chronicle

Most were featured in my 'Looking Back' column in the Cambridge News from 1996-2014

The complete 'Cambridgeshire Scrapbook' of which this is a small section is published online at
bit.ly/CambsCollection

I have digital and other copies of most of the stories summarised.
I hope to publish these online one day. If you would like them in the meantime then please get in
touch.

The original volumes are housed in the Cambridgeshire Collection at Cambridge Central Library
where there are many other indexes dating back to 1770.

They also have detailed newspaper cuttings files on over 750 topics that have been compiled since the
1960s.

Newspapers sometimes get things wrong. I copy things out incorrectly. Do check

There are a multitude of spelling and layout errors. Please forgive or correct them

News never stops but this file was finished on 31 August 2016.

I will maintain supplements and corrections – contact me for anything you need

Please make what use of these notes that you may. Kindly remember where they came from

See my website – www.mikepetty.org.uk for further notes.

Mike Petty, Stretham

2017

Note: these extracts also include stories about libraries in the surrounding area

1894 01 05

Free Library open to those living in country Ch 5.1.894 p8

1895 10 18

New Cherry Hinton reading room opened [2.1]

1897 02 27

The Guildhall floor has become so unsafe that when a ball is held in the large room the most elaborate precautions have to be taken to support the beams in the ceiling of the Free Library beneath. This shoring-up process costs something like 30/- each time and is a sheer waste of money 1897 02 27 CDN

1897 05 20

Sir - It has been a cause of much regret and dissatisfaction to many to hear of the closing of the Barnwell Branch Free Library. It was understood that the opening of the new library on the Mill-road would not interfere with the progress of the Barnwell branch, but it seems that the East-road library is to be closed to supply the Romsey Town Library with books. When it is closed I am afraid many people who would otherwise read, will patronise public-houses, for many men who have worked 12 hours would hardly care to walk a mile before they could get a book to read 1897 05 20 CDN

1897 06 03

The Mill-road branch of the Free Library was opened by the Mayor last night amid every manifestation of pleasure and satisfaction. The Mayor said that people who lived in that neighbourhood were too far from the Guildhall to be able to get the full advantage of the Free Library. Within a half-mile radius of the handsome new building there is a population of not less than 12,000 people. It was in May 1891 that the Guardians conveyed the site to the Corporation for the express purpose of erecting thereon a building for a branch free library. No public body ever made better use of public ground. Barnwell reading room closed, June 1897 06 03 CDN [1.13]

1897 03 05

Free Library for Chesterton, p2

1897 05 17

Mill Road library opening, p2

1897 05 19

New Free Library, p3

1897 06 12

Free Library movement, p2

1897 07 16

Free Library, p2

1897 08 07

Barnwell library

1897 08 16

Barnwell free library, p2 *

1897 08 25

East Road library, p2 *

1897 08 28

How many of the inhabitants of "aristocratic" Cambridge have penetrated the depths of Barnwell through the lovely labyrinths of Brewhouse Lane? A mere outsider might suppose that the city of colleges had no dark parts; that its workmen's tenements were models of sanitation and comfort; that its streets were well paved and lit; and that no foul smells arose from its sewers - in short, that a learned city would be raised and modelled on enlightened lines. For the dwellers in the "town" proper there is a reading-room and library. In Mill-road there is another reading-room and library amongst those who are, at least, moderately well to do; but in Barnwell, the abode of the toiler there is now nothing but hard work, smaller houses, surroundings much more unwholesome than in the other parts of the town - and his reading-room has been taken away. Can it be that those in authority are carrying out the scriptural prophecy: "To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even which he hath"? c1897 08 28

1897 09 29

Barnwell at bay – library committee impeached, p3 *

1897 10 14

Barnwell to get back Reading Room, 1897 10 14, p2-3 CDN

1897 10 26

Why no library free catalogue, p3

1897 11 27

Sir. The Reading Room on East Road, Cambridge will be re-opened on Monday next, from six till half-past nine o'clock. Everything has been done to make the room as efficient and comfortable as possible, new gas fittings and furniture provided and the floor has been covered throughout with linoleum. By the liberality of the Mayor about one hundred volumes of useful works of reference, biography and travel will be placed upon the open shelves. There will be supplied 15 daily newspapers and it is hoped that there will be a large attendance and an appreciable use made of the literature supplied - John Pink, Librarian 1897 11 27 CDN

1897 11 30

Once again the good folk of Barnwell are in possession of their reading-room. This time improvements have been carried out and the workers around East Road will not only have a convenient room, but also an attractive and comfortable one. The room is the same as of yore, and the exterior is as ugly as ever, but inside everything has been re-painted and varnished, & incandescent lights have replaced the old-fashioned flickering gas jet. Although Mr John Pink, the borough librarian, opposed the re-opening, since the decision of the Council to again provide facilities for the thoughtful working men of Barnwell he has done his utmost to ensure they are as full and liberal as possible 1897 11 30 CDN

1897 12 16

Castle End Reading Room reopened in deference to wishes of public [2.3]

1898 01 22

The report of Cambridgeshire Technical Education Committee shows the village library continued to be steadily appreciated. Where there are local libraries already established in villages in connection with reading-rooms, schools etc, the boxes of books offered would generally form a most useful addition, thus increasing the interest and variety on the most economical terms - carriage only, to and fro

1898 07 19

In the publication "Public Libraries," which is published in Chicago, is an article with reference to Cambridge libraries. "At the free public library, visited on Saturday evening, a changing crowd stood in line for nearly three hours, in spite of the fact that they were waited on at the rate of one a minute.

We found several labour-saving devices and conveniences in this library, which seemed to be a little ahead of the average Library we visited. One of the finest collections of Shakespeariana in the country is in this building CDN 1898 07 19

1898 08 08

At the Cambridge Free library committee meeting an offer was made by Mr W.H. Hattersley to present an oil painting of Mr John Pink, who has been the librarian ever since the commencement of that other institution in 1855. It was agreed to make the necessary arrangements for placing the portrait in the Reading Room. It is painted by Mr P Hall, master of the School of Art CDB 1898 08 08

1898 10 05

The annual report of the Cambridge public Free Library has been issued. Under competent management and the able direction of Mr Pink, it has continuously added to its resources. It is now as well equipped as anyone could desire. It has a reference library and in the Shakespeare and dramatic collections a special features of great interest and real value. Moreover there is the branch library at Mill road with 6,600 volumes and during the past year reading rooms have been opened at East road and Castle end. The people who enjoy these facilities of access to the best literature may well be envied by those who do not CDN 1898 10 05

1898 11 24

Freezing library, p2

1899 01 13

Smoke at Free Library, p2

1899 01 04

However poor the local newspaper its files are the best source of information as to what has taken place in the district. It is only in the British Museum that files of the newspapers are preserved as a matter of course. In places where there are free libraries a good deal is done but very often the files are incomplete and in some cases the importance of preserving these records is not realised as it ought to be. County councils should undertake the work of filing these newspapers, of binding the volumes and keeping them in a place ready of access by the public - 1899 01 04

1899 06 09

Chesterton board of guardians considered an offer from the Tramps' Mission to provide a library at the union for the tramps to happen to be sojourning there, also to furnish wall cards bearing matter profitable for Weary Willie's reading. The master of the workhouse viewed with very little favour these concessions to the literary tastes of those who make the Chesterton Union their hotel. In his opinion there is no matter more suitable for the tramps than the regulations which have been drawn to guide the conduct of those who resort to the workhouse for shelter. Give him text on the wall and he will have an excuse for taking his ease while he reads, or pretends to read them

1899 09 09

Looking over the catalogue of the Cambridge public library we were struck with the care exercised in obtaining and preserving copies of every publication of local bearing, even down to the most occasional leaflets. This is as it should be. It may well be that there are documents lying in inaccessible places what contain information for which even now students of local history are searching in vain. Why should these not be deposited in the public library, accessible to those who desire to make use of them? c1899 09 09

1899 09 26

There are some who deplore it very much that the Free Library readers should resort so much to fiction. There can be no greater waste of time than the reading of novels that are not worth reading. At the Central Library there were issued during the year 67,661 volumes in the class of fiction and it

must be admitted that Cambridge might with advantage become a little more serious in its reading. At the Mill Road branch 293 borrowers were added whereby it is made clear that the branch supplies a very real demand 1899 09 26

1900 05 09

Sir – As an old user of the East Road Reading Room, Cambridge may I complain of the insufficient supply of newspapers there. Morning newspapers are entirely absent, excepting one a day old. I received a severe shock some time ago when I founded posted up a copy of the “Times” newspaper, but found it was an old copy. In the old days we were allowed the “Times”. The reading matter is so seriously curtailed as to prevent one from arriving at a consensus of opinion; this tending to keep in darkness a not highly favoured part of the town – A. Clark, Walnut Tree Lane CDN 1900 05 09

1900 07 13

Mill Road library, p2

1900 09 28

Cambridge Library Committee state that during the past year the institution has been used by a larger number of persons than before. The war in South Africa necessitated a larger supply of newspapers, war maps and a service of telegrams. Every hour of the day there was a constant stream of visitors & during two weeks in February the reading rooms were visited by more than 57,898 persons CDN 1900 09 28

1901 01 11

Cambridge Free Library, p2

1901 04 10

Sir – In two hours on Saturday evening, with the aid of the efficient staff at the Central Library, two hundred books were exchanged – one every twenty-four seconds; taking back, making returns, finding fresh books and entering same in register and books. All this was done with a politeness and steadiness of deportment most commendable, Mr Pink jun. calling out in clear tones the numbers returned and those taken in place of them and his assistant staff, especially Mr Fenton proved themselves to be the right men in the right place. - One of the Crowd c01 04 10

1901 10 07

The police station is part of the machinery which Society has devised for its own protection and for inflicting punishment upon wrong doers. In the golden age there will be no use for Police Stations, and the fine building of which Cambridge has just witnessed the opening may justifiably be converted into a Free Library. There is no virtue in locking up a wrong doer in an ugly prison and the architect of the new station, Mr John Morley, has designed a building which is an ornament to the town. The cells are not luxurious but they are not stifling. It is true the building has cost a good deal but is excellent value for money.

1902 09 30

Free Library report, p2

1902 12 23

At the spacious premises of Laurie and McConnal, Fitzroy Street, Cambridge readers can secure anything they require for a seasonable gift. A special showroom is set apart for the display of cards, pictures, books, toys, games etc and they have a chose selection of mechanical toys which are quite a novelty in themselves. There is also a variety of artificial grasses and plants which it would be difficulty to tell from real; these would make very pretty decorations. There has just recently been added a lending library which includes books of the best-known writers

1903 03 20

Cambridge Free library, p3

1903 06 29

Librarian's salary, p4

1903 08 18

We do not think there is the slightest risk of smallpox spreading through the use of books belonging to the Cambridge Free Library. Almost directly the epidemic was made public, Mr Pink, the librarian, wrote to us stating that every infectious case was immediately reported to him by the Medical Officer of Health. If such persons were borrowers a notice was despatched informing them they would not be able to borrow any book until the house had been properly infected. Any books or cards they had were collected and promptly destroyed. We do not see any necessity for the closing of the Library – Editor
03 08 18

1903 08 18

Cambridge Library Committee considered the supply of literature for the use of the blind; they will subscribe for the supply of books provided a sufficient number of persons expressed their willingness to use them. It is hoped that those who "live in darkness" will be made acquainted with his decision. From 1895 to 1899 books were issued in response to applications but the number of blind readers never reached double figures. The average citizen will always be inclined to stretch a point with regard to expenditure in order to provide food for the brain for the blind. But how many are able to read the Braille type which has superseded the Moon system that was in vogue for some considerable time. 03 08 18

1903 10 23

Ald Spalding said the Free Library was a very worthy institution, but it was supported by the rates of the town & these should be used in opposition to legitimate businesses. There were three lending libraries in Cambridge, the proprietors of which paid a considerable sum of money for the rates. He did not think it right that the Library enter into competition by offering the use of fiction and the other advantages of the Library to county residents for the minimum annual subscription of 5s. It was not fair and should be discontinued. c03 10 23

1903 12 02

If the scene that attended the opening of the children's reading room at the Mill Road branch of the Cambridge Free Library can be relied upon the experiment ought to be attended with the happiest results. Within a few minutes of opening it was fully occupied by boys and girls and the demand for admittance was in excess of expectations with a large number waiting patiently outside until room could be made for them. Some had a long wait as once the children had settled down to the store of attractive books and pictures provided the employment became completely absorbing. Their clean faces and hands and well-brushed hair helped form a charming sight which their complete quietness and good behaviour rendered all the more attractive. c03 12 04

1903 12 03

Mill Road library opened a reading room for the exclusive benefit of children. Apart from the love of books and pictures likely to be instilled into the youthful mind there are habits of cleanliness, order & discipline. Dirty hands and faces are not permitted to enter and bad behaviour is punished by immediate expulsion. The children will be well looked after and tired mothers and weary fathers can rest with easy minds knowing their offspring are enjoying themselves without injuring either their bodies or their morals. 03 12 03

1904 01 14

The Cambridge Free Library committee are desirous that no resident should remain ignorant of the means at their disposal for acquiring knowledge. They have authorised the sale of the new catalogue at considerably less than cost price and issued a circular to every house. The Central Library reading room, with its wide selection of newspapers and periodical literature, invariably has its full

complement of readers. Borrowers are induced to take a work of fiction and another work away together and so a taste for reading of the useful kind is being instilled.

04 01 14

1904 04 14

Free Library heat, p3

1904 04 11

Sir – I would like to know who is responsible for the very cold atmosphere in the Cambridge Free Library Reading Room. A few weeks ago I tried to enjoy an hour's reading, but the cold and draughts were so severe that, although a hearty vigorous man accustomed to outdoor work in all weathers, I caught a severe cold. There are three stoves in the room but I have never seen more than one alight and a radiator which is usually almost cold. In the recent cold snaps the room has been under 45 degrees all day long. There is only a little cylinder boiler about the size of a beer cask inserted in an ordinary fireplace behind the counter of the lending department. Now they have installed a ventilating fan which works at intervals which not only causes a distinct chill but the noise and vibration are maddening, resembling the sound of a motor car running round the room – 'Ouvrier' 04 04 11

1904 06 16

Cambridge Library committee referred to the recent fire on Peas Hill and the destruction of the premises adjacent to the library. But for the skill of the fire brigade the reading room must have been destroyed and the contents lost. The accumulation of books, pictures and scarce literature could never be replaced. Now the old dilapidated buildings should be cleared away and a more appropriate building erected. Next year they would celebrate the jubilee of the opening of the library and the appointment of Mr Pink as Librarian. The Library Association should be invited to hold their annual meeting at Cambridge, free of charge. 1904 06 16

1904 09 15

Library editorial, p3

1904 10 01

What does Free Library cost Borough? Survey shows most readers under 30, 173 under 20 and only 15 between 50 & 60 04 10 01 [2.22]

1905 05 01

John Pink, the veteran Cambridge Librarian says that a man ceases to read books after attaining the age of 40. Library statistics show that older men do not borrow books but read more periodicals. The newspaper of today is a very different thing to what it was 40 years ago; around the newspapers in the reading room were many men, some eagerly peeping over each other's shoulders and several reading monthly magazines. Nor does the present generation read as much as before, athleticism occupies too much of their time, he feels 05 05 01a & b (Brock illustration of library users 56.93)

1905 08 21

Cambridge Free Library is singularly rich in local literature due mainly to the Librarian, John Pink. He was born some 67 years ago and is steeped in Cambridge lore. There is little that he does not know and is always able to tell where the answer is to be found. His catalogues testify to a conscience for detail and a zeal to make the library as comprehensive as possible. His conscientious manner and obliging disposition are reflected in all the members of his staff. 05 08 21b

1905 08 22

Library Association conference held in Cambridge – 05 08 22

1905 08 24

The Library Association Conference in Cambridge discussed Sunday opening. To believe opponents Sunday was a season of celestial peace where only the sound of church bells and the hymns of devout worshippers broke the sacred silence. By opening libraries were doing a noble work in providing young men with a place to read periodicals or great fiction. But others said Sunday opening had failed because the average working man did not want to go there. It involved extra expenditure which would be better devoted to new books. 05 08 24 & 24a

1905 11 02

Library annual report, p4

1906 10 25

Cambridge Library committee recommended that a branch reading room be opened in a room in St Paul's Institute, Coronation Street. But Prof Sorley said a reading room supplied people with ephemeral newspapers and magazines, it did not supply literary, technical, scientific or reference works and the central library did not have the works it should have. However it would prevent a great deal of loafing about in the streets which was productive of crime. 06 10 25b

1906 10 27

Library usage – buy sixpenny editions of novels; Speculation on reading ages – 06 10 27e

1906 11 26

It is with regret we announce the death of Mr John Pink, the Cambridge Borough Librarian. He started life as a bookseller's assistant but the adoption of the Public Libraries Act in 1853 opened up the walk in life which he has conscientiously and with dignity trodden for over half a century. Around him and his personality the Cambridge library has grown from small beginnings to its present state as one of the finest in the provinces, a permanent memorial to its first librarian. 06 11 26c & d funeral 06 11 28, 06 12 01[1.6]

1906 12 05

Freezing library, p3

1906 12 10

Free library salary, p3

1906 12 12

Library, p3

1907 01 02

A warm well-lighted room in St Paul's Institute New Town was opened as a reading room. There was a collection of current literature ready for the first arrivals who drew chairs to the tables and took advantage of the comfort and facilities provided. The Free Library was one of the most popular institutions in Cambridge, ten years ago a branch was established at Mill Road with other reading rooms at Castle End and East Road. 07 01 02 & 2a

1907 01 03

Cambridge Library – W.A. Fenton appointed librarian – 07 01 03b, 07 01 25

1907 01 07

Public library salaries – details – 07 01 07

1907 03 19

Some years ago Cambridge Free Library opened a public reading room at the Castle End Mission and Working Men's Institute. It has proved a boon to those who have used it. However the Institute's work is growing and their newly-formed men's club now has a comfortable room well equipped with

daily, weekly and monthly papers, a cosy parlour for games, conversation & smoking and a first-class billiard room with full-sized table. Membership is open to all men over 18. 07 03 19

1907 06 11

Cambridge Central Library Reading Room opened in 1884 but has now fallen behind many towns of similar size. The Reference library contains a Shakespeare library and an important Cambridge collection accommodated in galleries in the lending department. They have many old books, prints and artistic works they are unable to exhibit and cannot give the community the full enjoyment of their own possessions. There is a pressing need for an extension of its premises. 07 06 11a & 14, 07 03 16

1907 09 24

Cambridge Councillors considered the question of the old corn merchant's buildings on Peas Hill which were damaged by fire in 1904. The whole of the site, including the houses in Wheeler Street, should be used for municipal buildings with the basement and ground floor as an extension to the Central Library. 07 09 24a

1908 04 11

Plaque from King Street Almshouses added Library collection of objects 08 04 11

1908 08 07

Cambridge Free Library never gave details of their expenditure and it was wrong that a large spending committee should keep its operations in the dark. Members of the committee supplied goods to the library, it might be lawful but it was not expedient, a councillor claimed. But Mr Bowes had been a benefactor to the library whose advice had been invaluable and supplied books on the same terms as to other people. CWN 08 08 07

1909 01 08

Cambridge Free Library is to introduce a system of 'card charging' in place of the present system of 'ledger charging' for the issue of books. This is the most up-to-date and efficient method of issue known and will be a boon to borrowers and staff alike. In another reform that will meet with general approval any burgess may now borrow on signing a "burgess's voucher" rather than get the signature of a guarantor for the safe return of the books CWN 09 01 08

1909 06 04

Cambridge Free Library has acquired at auction a somewhat badly bound volume of Cambridge newspapers which are unique. They start as 'The Huntingdon, Bedford, Cambridge and Peterborough Gazette' of 15 April 1818 but change title to 'The Cambridge Independent Press'. The purchase shows the happy understanding between the University and Town Libraries both of which were anxious it should not pass into private hands. They agreed the Borough Library should have the first chance but that if the price were too high then the University would bid. 09 06 04

1909 08 21

During reflooring of Central Library annexe to Corn Exchange fitted up as reading room 09 08 21 [3.1]

1909 10 27

Cambridge Town Council – bathing places, water supply, fire brigade, library – 09 10 27

1910 04 08

Free Library given Hattersley Bros ledger 1765-5 – 10 04 08a

1911 04 07

Girton Village Institute is designed to promote the religious, intellectual and social welfare of villagers. An evening class for men of the artisan and labouring classes has been established. A small

library of interesting books and a billiard and bagatelle table have been provided and there will be lectures, concerts and entertainment. The Rector uses it for Sunday and Bible Classes and mothers' meetings in the day time. Such facilities are needed if we are to keep people on the land and make life in villages more interesting. 11 04 07d

1911 06 30

The present opening hours of the Central Library Reading Room do not meet the needs of people who commence business at 9am or earlier and must wait until 10 before they can consult directories or other reference books. Persons in search of situations are also at a disadvantage through not being able to see the newspapers at an earlier hour. In future it will open daily from 8.30 am to 9.30 pm. The advantages would justify the small additional expense involve. 11 06 30c

1913 08 08

Three fine fireplaces had been given to the Corporation by Mr Bishop to be built into the new addition to the Guildhall and Library. Although they could find a suitable place for one, they could not find space for two more. They had agreed to lend one fireplace to the new Archaeological Museum for six months but that was no use to the Museum: they wanted to incorporate it into their building. But the Council had few such valuable things and it was hard to part with them. They would be asked for one of the maces next. If one of the college buildings was pulled down, would they present the town with anything? 13 08 08 p7 CIP

1913 08 15

Cambridge Free Library reports an increase in use with as many as 3-400 visitors in one hour. The cultivation of interest in local history shows every probability of the future Reference Room being well used. It possesses a very fine collection of books, maps and plans on local subjects for which there is considerable demand. John E. Foster had been a generous donor and presented many volumes of local and antiquarian interest. 13 08 15 p9 CIP

1913 09 05

Guildhall extension ratepayer's opposition – any money spent on libraries should provide reading rooms for Chesterton, Cherry Hinton and Newnham: when a man got home from business he doesn't feel inclined to walk down to the town again – if you look into the Mill Road reading room at night you will see how much it is appreciated. 13 09 05 p5 CIP [3.5]

1913 12 19

Plans for alterations at the rear of the Guildhall were shelved after the Ratepayers Association raised a petition. They had to face a loss on the trams, the Borough Bill, Chesterton footbridge and other improvements and as the Colleges were building rapidly the town landladies found it hard to pay their rates. Now the County Council had decided to build their new offices in Hobson Street. They had been debating since 1907 and all the expense and time had been worthless. But the Free Library was over-crowded and disease was spread in libraries where people were constantly sitting together 13 12 19 p7 CIP

1914 01 23

"Scotched," — The Cambridge Ratepayers' Association (writes Free Lance) are patting themselves on the back, and proclaiming that they have been the means of "scotching" the Borough Council's scheme for the enlargement of the Guildhall. If the deferment of the proposal is not entirely due to the big opposition put forth by this organisation, at any rate the members are justly entitled to take a good deal of the credit for it, the number of signatures obtained for their monster petition being a plain indication that the great majority of the ratepayers were against such a costly proceeding. Whilst I have on several occasions expressed my opposition to such an extensive scheme, one cannot but realise the need which exists for better Public Library accommodation, and it is to be hoped the dropping of the larger scheme will not prevent the work of extending and improving the Library being carried through 14 01 23

1914 03 14

Library starts events diary 14 03 14 [3.6]

1914 03 27

Proposals for extra accommodation for the Library, Education Department, Juvenile Employment Exchange and Weights and Measures Department on the site now occupied by houses in Wheeler Street prompted long discussions. Nearly every councillor found it incumbent to express his opinions and an hour was passed away more or less pleasantly and profitably in this fashion. 14 03 27h [3.9]

1914 04 18

Protest against open access system, at present apply for volume & after profitless period of waiting learn that book out 14 04 18 [3.7]

1914 05 22

Cambridge Library was one of the finest in the country but all available floor space was utilised and extensions must be made, especially to relieve congestion in the Reference department. They should develop the site now occupied by houses in Wheeler Street and adjoining vacant land, councillors heard. But a library was a luxury and ratepayers did not want it. The plan was agreed 14 05 22f & g £5,000 scheme for additional offices for library passed council [3.9]

1914 10 02

Guildhall extension for library, education offices, juvenile bureau and Medical Officer of Health

1914 12 18

An inquiry was held into the Guildhall extension. The Librarian said at present they had two rooms for lending purposes and a reading room on the ground floor. Part of the Reference Library was in the reading room and it was very overcrowded. The basement would be used for storage. But the Ratepayers Association asked for it to be postponed until after the war. The University had practically ceased to exist, there are no pupils, the tutors have no fees and the lodging house keepers no tenants. Poor people were selling furniture to buy bread

1915 05 21

Interesting Engraving. The Cambridge Borough Librarian has been authorised to purchase, at cost of 35s. a local engraving, entitled the Dinner given to 15,000 persons on Parker's Piece Cambridge Thursday 28th June, 1838 in honour of the Coronation of her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria. The engraving is by Harraden 15 05 21 CIPof

1915 10 15

File of Cambridge Gazette newspapers purchased at auction sale 15 10 15

1915 11 26

Library expenditure – fewer books, classified list of books discontinued, annual report reduced in size; to reduce number newspaper, discontinue war telegrams to Central Reading Room 15 11 26 p5

1916 02 09

Walter Poole Littlechild, 50 years King's College chapel clerk; regular visit to Free Library to increase his knowledge – 16 02 09f

1916 04 28

Exhibition to mark Shakespeare Tercentenary held in new Reference Room 16 04 28 [1.7]

1916 05 10

Reference Library and Education department, Peas Hill – photo & details – 16 05 10c

1916 05 19

New reference room talk 16 05 19

1918 07 10

Library report says people have turned to reading as distraction from war – 18 07 10a

1918 11 27

Cambridge Free Library accession stamp – 18 11 27h

1918 11 27

Free library continues popular; not convenience for adopting the open shelves of the most up-to-date Free Libraries but compromise putting up of counter and wall cases in which a selection of books is placed for the inspection and choice of borrowers. The advantages of the recently added Reference Library are beginning to be appreciated and the number of users daily increases ... the general reading room in the evening is literally crowded. The Librarian, Mr Fenton who is in khaki has reached France & hope to soon be back. In his absence duties being carried out by his chief assistant Ch 18 11 27 p3

1920 05 11

Burrells Walk agree plans for remainder of the buildings which have been handed over; question of branch library – no

1920 11 03

Library reading room is badly heated, unlike reference room; working men like to visit after work – letter - CDN 20 11 03

1920 11 27

Library committee veto Mrs Asquith's autobiography 20 11 27, 20 12 04 [3.13]

1921 04 30

John Pink's son retires after 50 years at W.H. Smith railway bookstall [3.12]

1921 09 10

Reference library ought to have card index 21 09 10 [3.3]

1921 11 16

Village libraries – provision of a properly-organised service similar to that enjoyed by residents in towns; apply Carnegie Trust – 21 11 16c, 26 11 23a

1922 01 04

Cambridgeshire rural circulating library proposed with grant from Carnegie & appointment of Librarian 22 01 04

1922 05 06

The Cambridge Library Committee has resolved to convert the Free Library into an open access library, which will enable borrowers to go straight to the shelves and select books for themselves. It is a somewhat heroic experiment, as the library premises are old-fashioned, confined and ill-lighted. A thousand persons a day rummaging at will over the shelves in the limited space available is a serious proposition and considerable expenses will be involved in the rearrangement of shelves and bookcases. 22 05 06. [2.25, 3.4]

1922 06 30

"Sir. At one time I was a fairly constant user of the Free Library, but of late my visits are not so frequent for the sole reason that one cannot sit down and read with ease and comfort. As I enter the Library I am watched. I am stared at practically the whole time I am there, and when I leave the eyes

of some official stare at me until I am off the premises" - A friend of the library "Sir. I am in the Free Library practically every week day during the year, but I have never seen any member of the staff either "killing time" or "staring round private corners". They always appear to me to be well occupied; but however busy they are they are always most obliging and go to a very great deal of trouble to find out information if any is required". – Another Reader c22 06 30

1922 07 27

A pleasing ceremony took place at the meeting of the Cambridge Town Council when Col. C.T. Heycock, on behalf of the past officers of the headquarters of the Cambridgeshire Regiment, presented to the town a copy of the book which rests in Ely Cathedral, containing the names of the men of Cambs and the Isle of Ely who lost their lives in the war. The Mayor, in accepting the book said he was sure they would all feel it was their duty and privilege to take care of that handsome volume, and place it in the Public Library, so that all who cared could look through it and see the names of those gallant men who fell in the defence of their country

1922 09 30

Closed for 3 weeks while reclassify 15,000 books & construct 3-sided counter near entrance 22 09 30 [2.3]

1923 04 07

As a frequent visitor to the Cambridge Free Library, I have noticed with interest the very good use to which the reference library is put. It is especially satisfying to notice the number of school teachers and senior scholars who spend their Saturday mornings there, and this I have observed at the Mill Road branch as well as the Central Library, showing that the Cambridge library is, as it should be, a valuable auxiliary to the educational machine. The Mill Road Library was the worst sufferer in the necessary economies of wartime and is to receive preferential treatment in consequence c23 04 07

1923 08 11

Open access introduced to Mill Road 23 08 11 [2.26]

1923 09 18

Following a recent letter from the Vicar of Fordham in praise of the free library scheme which is being run in the villages by the Cambridgeshire County Council. Boxes of books of all classes are sent to the various villages, where demand for them has been found to exist, and are returned at the end of three months in exchange for a fresh supply. The first boxes went to 65 villages and boxes were also sent to 43 elementary schools for the special use of children. There are now 88 library centres in the county, and only 28 villages have not yet taken advantage of the benefit of the service. The scheme aims to develop the reading habit amongst those who have, as yet, been content to read nothing but the Sunday newspaper and a penny novelettes. Those in authority have no desire to attain a standard which may be called "highbrow" but hope to increase a healthy appetite for good books

1924 02 12

A largely attended meeting at Cherry Hinton carried unanimously a resolution urging the necessity of providing a branch reading room and library. Some said they should not ask for a library at the moment when all building was required for houses but they might ask public authorities sometimes a long time before they got anything. If they asked for a public library and reading room there was some chance they might get a box of books. (Laughter) c24 02 12

1924 04 14c

Mr T Peake said that at the present moment there was a library in Littleport, and he could assure them that there was hardly one book in it that he would care to find a place for in his home. For many years, he believed, it had not been used, but that did not alter the fact that there was a very strong desire for a supply of good books. The Isle of Ely county council was a very progressive one and he was sure that the members would not dare to go to their wives and tell them they had voted against the Carnegie

scheme. It was very rarely a wife got anything out of the county council - but she would certainly get something from the libraries

1924 07 29c

When the list of Cambridgeshire men who fell in the war was being compiled for the Memorial Chapel in Ely Cathedral there were many expressions of regret that the Borough itself had no official record of names. Most of the parishes have their own lists but there is no complete list of Cambridge names other than the sheet published at a popular price by the C.D.N. some two or three years ago, and now to be seen in the Free Library. Now there is a proposal for the provision of a roll of names in the Guildhall

1924 08 17

Here is a piece of information that will interest those of an inquiring turn of mind. The Cambridge Public Free Library is now on the telephone and the Borough Librarian, Mr W.A. Fenton invites inquiries by 'phone on any subject. The idea is to place the whole resources of the library at the disposal of any person seeking information by phone - in fact to set up an Information Bureau 24 08 16 [1.8]

1924 10 20

The Cambridge Library committee proposes to transfer the local collection to a more easily accessible position. At the present time it is shelved on the gallery in the committee room and few people realise the wealth of material to be found. It is proposed to transfer all bound volumes to the shelves in general, but it would be fatal to allow unlimited access and it is suggested that frames be fitted with brass wire lattice. The whole collection requires to be classified so that readers may see at a glance the extent of material on any subject c24 10 20

1924 11 01

Sir – One evening a friend and myself decided to spend an hour at the Central Library. No sooner had we entered the building than the eyes of the watch-dog firmly covered us and continued to do so the whole of the time we were there. We took our seats and my friend took from his pocket one of his own newspapers and began to read it inaudibly. This was too much for the watchers who came forward and told him to replace the newspaper in his pocket, adding that newspapers and books bought in by the visitors were not allowed to be read in the library and writing was only allowed when copied from the papers and books there. – “Economy, impartiality and courtesy c.24 11 01

1925 02 25

In the course of his address on “How to carry on a village library centre” Mr Milner said that at Cottenham he tried to hire a warm room and did not hurry people. Some librarians mixed the books with the hope that a borrower would be led to read a non-fiction book. But that was a trick which would probably make a person stop away from the library. The librarian should not spend his time issuing books. He had far more important work than that – to talk to borrowers and interest them in books. Mr Chapman, Whittlesford, spoke of choosing books for borrowers and said he had been greatly praised for giving people good books, when he knew nothing about the books (laughter) c25 02 25

1926 05 01

Display of playbills from Cambridgeshire Collection 1925 05 16 [1.9, 1.10]

1927 02 16

The work of maintaining a pictorial record of the streets and buildings of Cambridge is greatly facilitated by modern photography and much credit is due to those enthusiastic amateurs who perpetuate these important historical records. There are some excellent examples of the work of the Cambridge Photographic Club on exhibition at the Borough Library and the short time required to view the photographs will not be wasted.

1927 03 04

Cambridge Library Committee recommended that steps be taken to provide reading rooms in Chesterton and Cherry Hinton. At the time of amalgamation in 1911 it was one of the conditions that Chesterton should be given a public library. At Cherry Hinton they had in 1924 prevailed upon the council to provide a public reading room. It was hoped to set up a small reference library at each. Suburban Cambridge was growing rapidly and they were a necessity. 27 04 03

1927 07 08

Messrs Galloway and Porter, Cambridge, whose business operations extend to all parts of the world, have formed a private limited company. Mr Charles P. Porter, for many years sole proprietor, becomes chairman. He is well known as a Cambridge councillor and was formerly chairman of the Free Library Committee. His clients range from queens to factory boys and include foreign and colonial libraries extending to every part of the globe.

1927 08 27

Account of visit to library & assistance from staff; books covered with dust, new arrangement of Reading Room 27 08 27 [2.18] (photo 61)

1927 10 05

Cambridge Photographic Club had made progress with the photographic survey of the county and over 100 prints were produced. There was still a great deal to be done and this should be regarded as one of the most important parts of the club's work. A collection of photographs of Cambridge was exhibited in the Public Library. The East Anglian Federation had held its summer meeting in Cambridge, but the weather was not in favour of photography.

1927 12 13

Time was when "a village library" implied a shelf or two of antiquated and goody-goody books which had been discarded and presented by bygone residents who had fixed opinions as to the literary fare appropriate for villagers. Nowadays the books sent each quarter to a village can be selected by the residents, and their quantity and quality have only one limit – the demand that exists. There is a branch of the county library in every village, which means that everybody can now obtain any book needed for study from the Central Library for Students. The amount spent on a free library service which benefits every person in the community is not likely to be grudged by ratepayers. c27 12 13

1928 02 18

Grantchester's new village hall was opened. The building, which adjoins the Reading Room, is of steel with a stage, kitchen and cloakrooms. Mr Adeane, in declaring it open, expressed the hope it would not only be a social rendezvous, but a place where political differences were left outside. It was desired to renovate the old reading room and start a small museum and a library. Babraham had a village hall 25 years ago, largely due to the enterprise of Mr Adeane who had also started a wood-carving centre there.

1928 06 22

The Cambridge Borough Librarian reported that a reader at the Central Library had been detected in cutting out a coupon from a daily paper, and that he had refused the reader permission to use the libraries until the matter was referred to the Library Committee. They approved his action and decided that the reader in question be excluded from the libraries and reading room for a period of six months.

1929 01 28

The County Architect presented sketch plans for a new building on the Cambridge castle site, containing office accommodation, with council chamber, library and storerooms. It was futile to prepare plans for their existing needs when it was practically certain that under the new Local Government Bill they would have a large amount of additional work thrown upon them. Mr Dunn had erected the present County Hall in Hobson Street & was able to compete with the best architects in the

country with regard to a beautiful scheme and a beautiful building. But if he was forced to collaborate with another architect there would be delays and they would never get the building erected.

1929 09 21

J.J. Thomson lecture to Aslib – CDN 21.9.1929

1930

Library Association conference at Cambridge [3.8]

1930 06 18

Impington Hall has been presented to the County Council by Messrs Chivers & Sons to be used as a village college. It is in a good state of preservation and repair with central heating and electricity installed and is quite the finest site one could secure. It will provide a warden's house, caretaker's cottage, library and reading room together with two adult education rooms and staff room. A new block will be erected adjacent to it. 30 06 18

1930 12 09

Branch library site, Chesterton & Cherry Hinton – 30 12 09

1930 12 17

Miss Brooks, the Cambs County Librarian said some books which were distasteful to certain readers had been mutilated by self-appointed censors in villages. She had difficulties inducing youths to read, bringing to the notice of village craftsmen and farmers the technical book intended for them and exchanging books quickly enough to keep pace with rapid readers. Village halls seldom had any accommodation for a library; this should be made obligatory for any halls built with grants. 30 09
The county library committee debated spending a farthing rate on books, 80 per cent of which were fiction. Such books could be a waste of time or a downright bad habit. There was little difference between putting Edgar Wallace on a cinema screen and having him in a book. There was no reason why public money should be used to provide 'The Squeaker' free for boys and girls in the villages. But Sir Graham Greene said those in the country should enjoy the same advantages as those in town. 30 12 17

1931 04 17

St Ives town council has been awarded a site for the building to be called 'The Norris Library' which is to house a collection of Huntingdonshire topography, pictures and antiques collected by the late H.E. Norris. At his home in Chichester he had a room crowded with pictures, relics and literature. He was a man of great literary attainments and one of the finest chess players in England. The council recorded their gratitude and appreciation and stood for a moment of silence in tribute to his memory. 31 04 17b

1931 11 06

The atmosphere of Cambridge Reference Library was more reminiscent of a cinema during the showing of a hilarious comedy than a lecture room when the Rev H.K. Cossar told the cream of a world-wide collection of jokes about the church, University life and Irishmen. There is a great rivalry between John's and Trinity so when one dean sent a letter addressed to "The Dean of Trinity, near St John's College" the reply was addressed: "The Dean of Trinity, near Matthew's Café". 31 11 06d, e

1931 12 25

Sir – when Mr W. Rouse Ball and myself were invited to consider a local guide for publicity purposes we also recommended a volume of old views of Cambridge. In our local library and with the Photographic Club and many citizens, there are many old pictures which would prove of lasting interest as a record of the past, a volume which would appeal to all those who are interested in the township – Charles Porter, Sidney Street. 31 12 25c

1932 05 27

The Carnegie Trust offered to meet the cost of erecting a semi-permanent building to accommodate March Library provided the Isle of Ely County Council spend £200 on books. But councillors thought this an unnecessary expenditure at a time when people were hard pressed for money. 32 05 27 & a

1932 08 27

Sends out 15 reminders a week [1.11]

1933 02 06

Cambridge library ban on Shaw – 33 02 06b

1933 03 06

Branch libraries for Cambridge – Morley and Shirley schools – 33 03 06b

1933 04 06

While those living on the outskirts of Cambridge had many advantages in the way of fresh air and beautiful surroundings they did suffer certain disadvantages such as facilities for book-borrowing. Now two branch libraries have been opened in Morley Memorial Schools on the Rock Estate and Shirley Schools in the Green End Road districts. Each contains four hundred modern novels (mostly entirely new) and 100 popular non-fiction works and are open one evening a week from 6-8. This pioneering service could spread, if successful 33 04 06, 33 03 06b [1.13]

1933 07 20

Black Horse Drove school becomes badly flooded, not only with surface water but with sewage, councillors heard. Since so many more houses had been built on the higher land at Littleport a tremendous amount of sewage comes down whenever they got a heavy storm and settles in the playground. Tenders were received for the erection of a branch library at March together with a new senior school which will be named the Hereward School 33 07 20

1933 09 22

The Norris Library and Museum at St Ives was opened with full civic pride. Herbert Norris's collection of manuscripts and books was unique; there was nothing printed in the world concerning Huntingdonshire that was not there and it should become a county museum. The architect, Mr Inskip Ladds was congratulated. The council had also carried out improvements to the Waits and made new flower beds. 33 09 22

1934 01 05

A new branch of Huntingdonshire county library was opened by the Lord Lieutenant in a room in the municipal building at St Ives. It had been made possible through a grant from the Carnegie Trust and would prove of great benefit to the town. The chain of county libraries was now complete. Two libraries had now opened in St Ives within a few months; they now had a lending library and the specialised Norris Library at the new Museum. 34 01 05

1934 04 12

One of the first results of Cambridge borough expansion has been the taking over of the lending libraries in Trumpington and Cherry Hinton and these new branches were opened by the Mayor. He was sure the new libraries would be well looked after. Both are established in the parish schools and contain 400 modern novels and 100 popular non-fiction works. Approximately 100 volumes will be exchanged monthly with books from the Central Library. 34 04 12

1934 07 26

Libraries in hospitals – British Red Cross work – 34 07 26

1934 10 18

Rock Estate Library approved – 34 10 18

1935 09 07

Libraries arrange charter display at centenary of local government 35 09 07

1935 09 17

Sir – Burwell Public Reading Room has been closed for several months. The closure arose through some noisy louts who were permitted to become a great nuisance. For many years its tables provided daily and weekly newspapers and journals and some reference shelves were available. Never in the history of our country is it more necessary for the public to be able to read newspapers of different views. Burwell is the largest village in the county but the number of borrowers through the County Lending Library is very low: the building is only open for an hour or so on certain evenings which is quite inadequate – “Old Burwell Boy” 35 09 17b

1935 09 21

ASLIB conference – 35 09 21a

1935 12 10

A local history exhibition in the Central Library Reference Room in connection with the Local Government Centenary Celebrations shows how Cambridge looked in days gone by. Schoolchildren are showing the greatest interest as they make tours of the exhibits. Photographs show the changes more vividly than anything: it is hard to believe that the Hobson Street pictured is the same one today. Political broadsheets from the 1840s comment on the ‘horrible extravagance’ of police expenditure and hint that all was not well with the painting of the inside of the Council Chamber - it advises local painters to have nothing to do with the job. 35 12 10

1936 01 31

There was a need for providing a community welfare centre for the housing estates on the outskirts of Cambridge where a large proportion of the houses were occupied by youngish married couples with growing children. Chesterton is like a new town, the people are isolated, lonely, vague and have no centre. Youngsters wandered aimlessly about with nothing to do and nowhere to go. They need a building for public meetings, concerts, dances, films and medical inspections. But it would not be suitable as a library and a site in Ascham Road would offer quietness and room for any necessary growth, councillors were told. 36 01 31 & a # c.37

1936 03 26

Huntingdon County Library 10th report – 36 03 26b

1936 05 21

At the opening of the new Rock Road library the Mayor said that in these difficult times it was important that there should be in every district a building which would help to circulate the best ideas and information for the guidance of residents. In the days to come the building will become more and more the intellectual home of the people who live around it. All would agree it was the right policy to encourage children to use it. He regretted the absence of a representative of the Carnegie Trust, which had helped with the money for the library 36 05 21a [1.2, 1.16]

1936 05 23

Mr W.A. Fenton, the Borough Librarian, has seen a tremendous growth in the reading public since he took office. The new Rock Road Library has had an excellent start-off this week. When I looked in last night I found a continuous flow of adults and juveniles. The children’s reading room was practically full and some boys to whom I spoke assured me that everything was quite all right. Work on a new branch library at the corner of Milton Road and Ascham Road will begin almost immediately. The site appears to be an ideal one and new building should be complete before 1937 is very far advanced 36 05 23c

1936 06 23

The Cambridge Preservation Society reported that the Three Tuns in Castle Street was in so bad a state of repair that it was unable to put forward a scheme for its preservation and so it will be demolished. Dwelling houses in Cambridge Place will be cleared but a site in New Street was unsuitable for building and should be turned into an open space. The Central Library Reading and Reference Rooms will be closed four days for cleaning with the Corn Exchange used as a temporary alternative, councillors agreed. 36 06 23

1936 10 13

The Central Library Lending Department is housed in the oldest and most unhygienic part of the building in Wheeler Street. The room is badly provided with natural lighting and artificial light has to be used. When 'open access' was installed in 1921 the annual circulation was 141,968 books and now it is over 309,000. It should move into the present domed Reading Room. Most of the bookcases have been in use since 1862 and would be unsightly; they should be replaced by steel shelving. 36 10 13c

1936 10 17

Lending library bookcases too close together and too dark, were designed in days of 'closed access' system when books obtained by assistants – 36 10 17c & d

1936 10 20

Sir – I use the Public Library very frequently. The Reading Room is extremely popular and is at all hours of the day well patronised. But the Lending Department might be bettered. The conditions are most undignified and unworthy of Cambridge. The great bulk of borrowers are centred around the 'Fiction recently returned' shelves making use of light from the Wheeler Street windows. However it is a pleasure to watch the extreme precision and incredible speed of the assistants receiving or dating books. 36 10 20b

1936 11 04

The Cambridge and County Folk Museum at the old 'White Horse Inn' was opened in the presence of a large company. It would become a clearing house of information on local matters in a town where there is more information about Papua than Pampisford. The Corporation had handed over its old measures, the steelyard used at Stourbridge Fair and the High Constable's stave while the Public Library had loaned portraits and caricatures to give a human touch to the museum. Miss Catherine Parsons has accepted the position of honorary curator with Reginald Lambeth as custodian. 36 11 04b & c

1936 12 05

W.A Fenton, Borough Librarian has done much to raise the standard of library books in Cambridge. He is a worthy servant to the public whose willingness to help all and sundry who frequent the Reading Room is well-known. – 36 12 05c

1937 03 04

Miss Lilian Clarke gave a lantern lecture on 'Lady Margaret and her two colleges' in the Reference Room of the Central Library. She drew on her wonderful store of knowledge of bygone Cambridge with many interesting anecdotes that kept her large audience entertained. Recently it has been found that the main gate of St John's College was being rattled down by the heavy lorries which passed through the narrow streets every night. It will be necessary to rebuild, but there are problems in getting bricks to match 37 03 04

1937 04 23

Opening Ascham Road library, the Mayor said it was a great day for Chesterton. In that beautiful building, with good light and accommodation they could look at the books and select them for themselves. The children's library would encourage youngsters to read. At present physical education was the fashion. We were in danger of producing a nation finely developed from the waist down. The library would help to counteract it. Ten months ago they opened a branch library in Rock Road and so

far 87,799 books had been issued, very close to the number at Mill Road branch which had been in existence 40 years. (Applause). 37 04 23c & d [1.1]

1937 05 07

Bottisham Village College was opened by the President of the Board of Education. During the day the college houses 240 scholars in the senior school with a provided for the county library which will be used by students at evening classes. The warden's house and a house for women members of staff occupy a site opposite the main building. Adjacent is the junior school with a nursery for the under-fives and the Sir Hailey Stewart Clinic for the medical inspection of pupils. 37 05 07 & a

1937 08 11

Royston public library has 1,120 readers but all they can offer is one evening a week with the books displayed in 22 heavy transport boxes placed on school desks in a classroom. These have to be replaced in a corner of the room at the close of the library. In spite of these adverse conditions it is greatly used and appreciated. The UDC has power to raise a library rate to provide a room. This would allow more books, extended opening and better conditions. As a quarter of the population use the library it merited careful consideration, councillors were urged 37 08 11

1937 09 11

Searle cartoon about reading 37 09 11 [2.13]

1937 09 27

Microfilm will bring the library resources of the world to the desk of an individual scholar, a Cambridge conference was told. The prodigious daily flood of newspapers can be compressed photographically into little rolls of microfilm making them perpetually 'in print' while censuses, birth and death records and correspondence can be duplicated. The technology is still being developed and will take much longer than expected, but a satisfactory reading machine should cost about as much as a portable typewriter 37 09 27

1937 12 15

Royston library may yet be decently housed. Royston Men's Social Club is prepared to grant the County Council the use of a room on the ground floor of their premises in Kneesworth Street at a rent of five shillings a week to include lighting, cleaning and heating. It would be available for the continuous storage of books in lock-up bookcases and made exclusively available for the exchange of books for one hour on one evening a week. The cost would be £13 a year for the hire of premises and £20 for the provision of lock-up bookcases 37 12 15d

1938 03 10

Cambridge Reference Library was packed to capacity for a lecture and demonstration on television by Mr D. Jackson of Pye Ltd. Severe electrical interference unfortunately ruined the first half of the programme from the Alexandra Palace but when after half-past-nine this eased off they were able to see some quite good vision signals and appreciate the high standard which can be expected in an area where interference is not so acute as it is in the centre of the town. 38 03 10

1938 05 07

Searle cartoon about Cambridge library issues 38 05 07 [2.14]

1938 08 22

Mr H.G. Wells criticised Cambridgeshire Village Colleges: "They are very beautiful specimens of architecture. I admired the decoration of the rooms, the beautiful chairs and tables. And then I went into the library and was shocked beyond measure at the unattractiveness and want of imagination. There were no dictionaries or encyclopaedias. There were no books of reference. There was not even a Whitaker. These things are of great educational importance" If some of the money spent on flowers and tables was expended on reference books it would be better for the village college as an

educational institution”, he told a conference. 38 08 22a. also 38 08 23 response from wardens – 38 08 24a

1938 12 16

J.H. Bullock re-elected to Library committee for 51st time; first elected 1887 (?) and served over 50 years 38 12 16

1938 12 17

Libraries want old pictures of Guildhall site to copy 38 12 17 [2.15]

1939 02 03

Central library alterations, Miss Greene gives watercolours – 39 02 03a

1939 02 11

Cambridge Central Library lending department will transfer to what is now the main reading-room making it more commodious and in every way more convenient both for borrowers and the library assistants. With better natural lighting and the new bookcases the books will be shown to greater advantage and readers should be able to move round more freely. The present lending department will be used mainly for the newspapers. Magazines and periodicals will be found on the other side in the present reference room and librarian’s room which will open into each other. The librarian’s new room will be upstairs in the present education offices, and there too the reference room will be found. 39 02 11a [1.18, 1.19]

1939 02 13

Mary Greene exhibition of water colours at Cambridge library, recently donated – 39 02 13a

1939 03 02

Borough Librarian, W.A. Fenton, lectures on Guildhall site – 39 03 02a

1939 03 23

Parts of Milton Road branch library are unsafe and re-building is the only cure, the Library Committee was told. It was constructed on the site of an old brickyard and there has been a serious settlement. Every cove cornice in every part was cracked and the whole library should be pulled down. A new building a short distance away was erected a short time ago and when the foundations were exposed it was found they had no bottom. It had to be built on piles that went 15 feet down to get a foundation. 39 03 23a

1939 04 11

Long queues of borrowers, six staff busy issuing books, Lending much better 39 04 11 [1.19]

1939 05 11

Milton Road Library – surveyor’s report on site; some movement but hundreds of houses have been built on sites excavated for gravel or coprolite – 39 05 09. But cracking continues – 39 05 11b

1939 07 01

Mill Road library was built on part of the old workhouse field; a Chesterton reader recalls “The firm who did the plumbing were so short of work that they ‘small-ganged’ this job and in the forming the foreman used to say “Mill-road gang, fall in”. The library is very handy to pop in to read the papers. A.E.H. remarks: “I have good reason to know it as I spent many happy hours in the management of that establishment when I was an assistant librarian under the late John Pink” 39 07 01

1939 07 28

Cambridge Town council held its last meeting at Shire Hall while the Guildhall was reconstructed. The Library committee asked to use the Small Room as temporary reading room during the re-arrangement of the Central Library. But it had a very expensive carpet that might get spoilt. The

library might use the Corn Exchange annexe if the cycles were moved. Ald Briggs said that was not a proper alternative: "The fact is that we have had made a beautiful Guildhall, but must not use it". The carpet could be taken up. But the Guildhall might not be finished by that time and it would be unfortunate if people were allowed in the Small Room before the rest were completed. The request was denied – 39 07 28b & c

1939 09 05

Cambridge is getting into its war stride. After-dark bus services are curtailed owing to lighting restrictions, no cinemas are open and public libraries close at sunset. Banking hours are now 10 to two on weekdays and delays may occur in the collection of cheques. Various museums are taking steps to protect exhibits from damage and already half of the stained glass in the east window of King's College Chapel has been removed. It is being packed and taken to a place of safety. The remaining 23 windows are being left as they are, owing to the enormous nature of the task of removing the glass. 39 09 05a

1939 09 08

War Measures at Cambridge. Banks, buses and libraries are among the services affected by the situation. Both lending departments and reading rooms of the public libraries in the borough are closing by sunset, in view of the lighting regulations. 39 09 08 CIPof

1939 10 13

Work re-arranging Cambridge Central Library is going on well. Book cases are being installed in the domed room, the Reference Library has moved to the Education Offices and its old home will house magazines. 39 10 13b

1939 11 10

The first part of the new scheme for improving the Central library is complete. In the new lending department book shelves radiate from a central staff inclosure, providing more room and improved natural lighting. The old lending library will become the newspaper reading room while the old reference room will be used for magazines. An innovation is the transfer of the reference room upstairs to the old Education offices, entrance to which is gained through Peas Hill. Refugees, evacuees and any person resident in Cambridge are eligible as borrowers. 39 11 10

1939 11 11

The changes at the Central Library are working well with at least 200 books dealt with in the first half hour. There was a long queue of borrowers with half-a-dozen assistants in the centre issuing books as hard as they could go. From the point of view of light and supervision the new Lending Library will be very much better than the old. In the new magazine room – the old reference room and Librarian's office rolled into one – the mural decoration is tasteful. The new Reading Room opens in a week or so. The new reference room upstairs has been open for some time and a good many townspeople have found their way up there 39 11 11b

1939 12 12

Libraries to close at black-out time – 39 12 12, 39 12 15

1939 12 29

William Harry Smith was chairman of library committee and edited Public Library Record – obit – 39 12 29

1940 02 02

Paper strips should be placed over the settlement cracks at Milton Road Library to see whether there was further settlement. It was of very nice design but parts would have to be taken down and rebuilt. If the surveyor had known what was going to happen it would have been built on piers. But he had no knowledge that the ground had been disturbed. However any idea the library was going to fall down on the people who were consulting books was absolutely ridiculous. 40 02 02b

1940 10 09

Milton Road library slight movement on one side caused by sub-soil, not to underpin at present due shortage of material – 40 10 09a

1941 03 19

Protecting library dome will cost £50 – 41 03 19

1941 05 07

Library dome – cannot obtain wire netting to protect glass dome so recommend it closed on sounding of an alert – 41 05 07

1941 07 21

Milton Road library wall underpinned; problem with clay – 41 07 21

1941 08 23

Poison gas exhibition at library, photo – 41 08 23a, 41 08 26

1942 02 21

Tank exhibition at Central Library – 42 02 21c, d

1944 01 08

H.H.J. Robinson retires as Librarian, Mill Road; was appointed in 1897 when 12,000 books issued. Brother was P.R. Robinson of Trumpington – 44 01 08 [1.20]

1944 02 05

Poem on tidiness of library staff 44 12 05 [1.21]

1944 03 17

Death of Mr. H. G. Spicer.—Many in Cambridgeshire and beyond will learn with regret of the death on Saturday last of Mr. Henry George Spicer, J.P., of 20 Old Queen Street, Westminster, and of Homewood, Sawston. He was 68. A former High Sheriff, Mr. Spicer was well-known in Cambridge as a magistrate, and on the retirement of Judge Farrant, became chairman of the Cambridge Division. He was known in Sawston as chairman of Edward Towgood and Sons, Ltd., the old-established paper mills, which he bought for his company in 1918, and which he re-organised and modernised extensively. He also bought the Towgood estate and other land in Sawston and Whittlesford, in order to develop a flourishing group of factories for companies of which he was chairman. For his employees and others in neighbouring villages, Mr. Spicer was particularly thoughtful, and for these he laid out a sports ground, erected a theatre and cinema and a reading room and library. He also supported many other local improvements and charities. He was a generous benefactor to Sawston Village College, which, when it was built, was the first of its kind in the country.

1944 10 13

Books Villagers Borrow. —The register of books issued by the Cambridgeshire Education Committee to the many village libraries in the county is a most interesting document, as it gives some indication of tastes of the villagers today. At the last census the village of Melbourn housed 392 families, and had a population of 1,294, and the number of borrowers on the register was 350: The books issued during the 12 months ending September 30 last numbered 12,849 (an increase of 136 over the previous year) and they are classed under the following headings: Philology 0, Religion 3, Philosophy 28, v Bibliography 38, Natural Science 57, Fine Arts 87, Sociology 132, Literature 135, Useful Arts 172, Biography 481, History and Travel 1,164, Fiction 10,552.

1944 11 25

J.H. Bullock retires from Library Committee after 55 years, presents Cooper's Annals to two branch libraries – 44 11 25a [1.22]

1944 12 20

Cambridge library has dearth of up-to-date books, auctions old periodicals – 44 12 20b

1945 03 10

Fenton retires as Borough Librarian after 50 years, [1.23]

1945 05 04

Librarian's salary should be £650, which low – 45 05 04

1945 07 19

W.A. Munford appointed Borough Librarian, comes from Dover – CDN 1945 07 19 [1.24]

1945 07 20

Old Post Office had been purchased about 1937 to give council control of improvements to the corner of Petty Cury; would have to be set back; might make ideal site for new library – CDN 1945 07 20a

1945 09 14

More about Cambridge air raids; some remarkable escapes; bombs which failed to explode – a large book in Guildhall might be placed in Library, the official record of enemy air activity; incendiary n roof of Rock Road library; incidents in county – 45 09 14a, 14b

1946 05 04

S.C. Roberts of Pembroke College, chairman of Borough Library committee to chair University Library Syndicate – 46 05 04

1947 05 06

A period piece, the period of which the members of the Library Committee do not particularly appreciate, was how the present high domed roof of Mill Road branch library was described when a resolution authorising the provision of a new false ceiling was criticised at Cambridge town council meeting. Ald E.S. Peck said "When I was chairman I thought it was rather a charming building architecturally and I think it would be entirely spoilt if they put a new ceiling in c47 05 06

1948 12 24

List of questions answered by Reference Library staff during 1948 [1.25]

1949 09 24

W.A. Munford talk Businessmen's Club

1950 03 04

Mary Greene paintings lent for display at Folk Museum 50 03 04

1950 05 24

Mr Sidney Inskip Ladds has left his written, drawing and printed material in folders marked "S" together with photographs, prints and negatives to the Norris Library, St Ives. All similar material marked "H" and a series of Huntingdonshire maps and watercolour pictures of local churches have been presented to Huntingdon county council to be preserved by them in the Reference Library there.

1950 10 18

A century of public libraries is celebrated with a joint city and county library exhibition in the Guildhall. A most striking feature is the stand showing ten great volumes of The Times together with 15 small boxes which house the same record of the newspaper, but on film. With children's books is exhibited Mr J.W. Franklin's model electric railway engine, which will be worked for the benefit of juvenile visitors c50 10 18 [2.6, 4.1]

1950 11 29

Referring to the 'controversial question' of whether the public library should keep open longer in the evenings the Cambridge Borough Librarian, Dr W.A. Munford, said that libraries tended to close earlier than before the war simply because there was no demand for later opening. He referred to an experiment three years ago when they had opened an hour longer – and been accused of wasting fuel
c50 11 29

1950 12 18

Dennis Collins and his wife, Jean, are two local people making good in the entertainment world and much in demand at parties. Dennis got a job with the Hunstanton council to act, with Jean, as universal uncle and aunt to children on holiday there. Throughout the summer they were to be found on the sands, running children's games, skipping contests and sand-design competitions. Dennis taught himself conjuring with the aid of a couple of books borrowed from the Cambridge public library and is now a member of the Magic Circle. Jean, who was a pupil of the Mackenzie School of Music and Drama, played the piano and sang.

1952 01 05

Rock Road library needs two copies of the Cambridge Daily News as first is worn out 52 01 05

1952 02 05

The possibility of Cambridge librarians co-operating in the attempt to compile a union catalogue of all books in the University, City and County libraries relating to the University, City and County of Cambridge was enthusiastically received by members of the Cambridge Library Group. It would enable anyone to look for a book which was to be found in any of 25 libraries. On the whole the college libraries' catalogues of old books were not good & in two colleges the librarian had said it was useless to rely on them. CDN c 5.2.1952

1953 11 25

Mr W.A. Munford, Cambridge City Librarian for the last eight years, has been appointed to one of the great national library posts, that of Director-General of the National Library for the Blind. He is one of the best known librarians in the country and was chosen for a total of 300 applicants. He will continue to live in Cambridge, which he describes as "too good a place to leave unless you have to".
c53 11 25 Eric Cave appointed City Librarian [2.8]

1954 03 01

County councillors voted to proceed with their original plan for the new Shire Hall courts building. They also need to get their Town Planning people transferred from Hobson Street and must have further accommodation for the County Library, which is one of the finest – if not the finest – in England. Suggestions for putting another floor on the present Shire Hall would never be satisfactory. Services would be upset for about two years, the whole of the heating apparatus would have to be altered and it would cost nearly £70,000. There were plans for the basement to be used as offices but to put clerks down there would be like putting them in prison.

1954 04 22

Cambridge Coun Mrs Phyllis Clarke told a meeting: "One hears a lot about the big housing rate, but it is only 8d in the pound – the same rate as the Library service. Do we hear of book borrowers being jeered at because they take home subsidised books, or properly owners complain about the cost of a subsidised policeman guarding his property". The housing programme should be expanded but she condemned the "little rabbit hutches masquerading as houses on the Arbury Road Estate"

1954 07 17

There were strong protests at plans for new offices at Shire Hall Cambridge. The new building would contain Assize and Quarter Sessions courts, offices and accommodation for the County Library. The courts at Linton, Caxton, Melbourn and Bottisham were 'shockers', housed in old police stations and the magistrates would be only too happy to do their work in an up-to-date building. Architects had

strongly advised against cheese-pairing costs of the assembly hall: Cambridge's lovely college buildings had been the best and had stood the test of time and the costs of labour and materials were rising. But a new plan for one-tier local government might mean the doom of County Councils and the scheme should be deferred.

1954 11 18

Councillors discussed the problems of building a new school on Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge. It was known that the site was water-logged and deep piles would have to be provided for the foundations. Chesterton Library which had been built on deep piles was already cracking up and for the same thing to happen to this expensive school would be disastrous. These difficulties had been pointed out to the Planning Officer but they supported the 'green field' site that was now developing into a 'green G-string'

1954 11 27

Cambridge assize courts should be moved to the City Library site at the Guildhall, councillors suggested. There might be some overcrowding on the first day of the Assize when all the prisoners, witnesses and jurymen in all cases had to be present or if there was a case that attracted particular public interest. But there would be a substantial saving in capital expenditure. For some time they had wished to provide new premises for the library as the Central Lending Library and Reading Rooms were no longer adequate; before the war there had been proposals to move it to the old Post Office building in Petty Cury.

1955 03 15

Plans for a new assize court at the Cambridge Guildhall would entail the entire rebuilding of a large proportion of the existing structure; there would be parking and traffic problems, though these would be eased with the Lion Yard multi-deck car park. The Council would be prepared to lease the premises occupied by the Library Department and the city sessions court could be used on payment of an agreed sum. 55 03 15 c

1955 05 02

The County Council agreed that an assize court on the Guildhall site was not practical. When the City had suggested the adapting the Central Library site they must have known it was inadequate. Some of the supporting columns of the Lending Library could have to go and hardly any of the reading rooms would be retained. Cambridge needed a new Central Library but this would not be sent from Heaven. It would have to be paid for and that was behind it – the City wanted someone else to pay for it. 55 05 02b [2.9]

1955 06 18

Cambridge City Libraries are celebrating their centenary with an exhibition in the Guildhall which will look at the past, consider the present and glimpse into the future. This may include a branch library at Newmarket Road, a Mobile Library service, a new Central Library – all projects which from time to time receive consideration. 55 06 18b

1955 06 27

Opening an exhibition celebrating 100 years of public libraries in Cambridge, the Master of Pembroke College, F.C. Roberts, said he was proud to have been chairman of the Library committee for some years adding: "I should have been even prouder if my first name had been correctly spelt! But these occasional mistakes show librarians have humanity as well as scholarship". There are books of every description, a machine through which microfilm copies of newspapers are shown and a cartoon by Ronald Searle. 55 06 27 a-b [2.10, 4.2]

1955 07 21

The County Library has issued far more books this year. The new branch library at Bassingbourn is well used and library centres were provided for the first time at Papworth Everard. The Matron of the Settlement provided accommodation in the Welfare Hut and the stock of the existing library was

handed to the county authorities for amalgamation with the new books. A small library was also provided at the school. 55 07 21

1955 10 29

Issue record number of books - 2,043 - after closure for Royal visit [2.11]

1955 10 31

Cambridge Reference Library is normally well used – on average over 200 people each day consult material. But last week has seen it fuller than normal; additional tables and chairs have been brought in and frequently all are taken. This is because the Reading Room is being divided to create a new Junior Library. A number of the more serious periodicals will be transferred to the Reference Library where book cases will be removed to make more space. 55 10 31

1955 12 23

New Reading Room opens, Junior library soon 55 12 23 [2.12]

1956 01 12

Central library reading room changes – periodicals – 56 01 12

1956 01 20

Proposals for a mobile library service for Cambridge failed by a single vote. The present service was hopelessly inadequate; the Newmarket Road area had a population of over 10,000 with only the difficult-to-find Ditton Fields branch library. The council would not become bankrupt by buying a lorry for a mobile library. But maintenance would be £1,000 a year and they should not spend such a large amount on a service which was not a necessity. 56 01 20c

1956 02 10

East Road Reading Room site demolished – photos 56 02 10 [2.16]

1956 02 25

Mill Road Library has been transformed from ‘a barn of a place’ to a branch library in keeping with the present-day idea of the service. The Reading Room that occupied more space than the lending library, which issues over 1,000 books on peak days, has been reduced in size yet will still accommodate more than 40 readers and the newspapers will be displayed on slopes and tables. 56 02 25c [2.17]

1956 07 07

Reference Library issues ‘Information’ 56 07 07

1956 07 28

Non-Cambridge users of the City Library service will have to pay more to borrow their books. The annual subscription is to rise from five to ten shillings to take account of the increasing cost of providing the service. It seems unlikely that many will discontinue their subscription as last month nearly 60,000 books were issued. Another change sees the scrapping of tickets on which only ‘nonfiction’ books could be borrowed. Now readers can have three tickets for any books. This will help readers who do not remember on which particular ticket a book has been issued. 56 07 28b

1956 12 01

Councillors decided not to increase the salary of the Lending Librarian to £780 though NALGO had protested that the grading was not high enough, and warned the post would be blacklisted. But if one librarian was regraded then his deputy would also want an increase and things would go on one above the other. No library assistant needed more than a good pair of feet and courtesy towards the public. But in a University city the service should be first class. 56 12 01c

1957 01 18

Cambridge councillors argued for 40 minutes over whether to regrade the post of Lending Librarian. When advertised the Library Association had advised against its member applying and there had been no suitable candidates. They were dictating to the council who should be masters in their own house. They decided to keep the present salary of a little over £12 a week. 57 01 18

1957 05 11

A Government White Paper proposes wider powers for councils such as Cambridge City who wish to be free from the control of the County Council. It says they should be entrusted with responsibility for services such as health, education, roads, town planning, libraries and licensing waste food boiling plants. But the city will still press for county borough status. 57 05 11

1957 05 17

Barbara Sandall, children's librarian, Cambridge Central – 57 05 17

1957 07 25

Miss Lilian Clarke has left all her books on Cambridge and her pamphlets, pictures, maps, newspaper cuttings, lantern slides and negatives to the City Library with the request that all duplicate items be sold and applied towards the publication of her book 'Cambridge Calling'. She also left all her papers relating to the Clarke family to the County Library at March and her blankets and pillow cases to the Evelyn Nursing Home. 57 07 25

1958 03 15

Newmarket Road library opening postponed – 58 03 15

1958 03 28

Sir. The majority of Cambridge ratepayers earn much below the average national wage of £12 a week yet have to pay annual rates of £22. The Lending Library Service is one where economies could be found. Every ratepayer is currently entitled to three library tickets, so an average family can borrow twelve books. If the number were cut this would save money - Councillor A.W. Arundale. 58 03 28 a & b

1958 09 27

Newmarket Road branch library was the first to be opened in Cambridge for 21 years. "That is the progress in this enlightened City in providing the citizens with books", commented Ald. Howard Mallett. The premises were of a temporary nature and later another building would be erected when finances permitted. The librarian would be Mrs M.A. Traviss and it would open every weekday from 10 am to 7pm, (1pm Wednesdays) 58 09 27a [2.20. 4.3] (

1958 12 16

Cambridge City Libraries' annual staff dinner and party was held in the Guildhall. Librarian, Eric Cave recalled they had closed 'that museum piece, the East Road Reading Room and the Ditton Fields Sub-Branch while sub-branches at Cherry Hinton and Trumpington had more to better accommodation. The Libraries were much appreciated and he looked forward to their continued progress. Games, dancing and entertainment followed organised by J.W. Franklin, L.J. Horspool, C.C. Marsh, R.J. Tarrant and Miss B.K. Wadsworth 58 12 16b

1959 04 29

The City Council is to consider the largest project ever undertaken in Cambridge. The giant Lion Yard scheme includes a two-decker underground car park taking 731 vehicles, a unique 'pedestrian shopping precinct', a new central library, residential hotel and a petrol filling station. Jesus College have also submitted a scheme for the redevelopment of the north side of Fitzroy Street. Many think that increases in shopping facilities ought to take place as an extension of this well-established area. 59 04 29a-d & 59 04 29e

1959 05 08

Qualifications needed as a Librarian – 59 05 08

1959 07 24

Councillors withdrew their attention from the Lion Yard area to a part of the city which some have always considered of equal importance – Fitzroy Street. This should be comprehensively redeveloped to provide residential, shopping and business facilities with a new bus station. The Lion Yard should be developed with a library, civic restaurant and small car park, leaving the frontages as they are, some argued. 59 07 24b & c

1960s The Cambridgeshire Collection has detailed newspaper cuttings files from this date

1960 03 18

Ninety small boys and girls flock to Rock Road library every Thursday to hear stories read by Miss Kathleen Asbery, the recently-appointed children's librarian. She visited a school's youngest infant class and when told she was from the library one small girl asked "Is she here because we have some books missing?" "It seems awful that children should think of librarians as ogres who stand behind counters, stamp books and charge them a penny for a late-returned item", Kate said 60 03 18

1960 04 09

City libraries' staff shortages – 10 changes means service may fall below usual high standards 60 04 09a

1960 05 28

East Anglian Bibliography launched – 60 05 28a & b

1960 11 04

Cambridge's City Librarian, Eric Cave (46), looks upon his job as a vocation. Its prime function is to provide a book and information service for the public it serves. The Reference Library take delight in answering any question on any subject including the date of erection of a certain house in Orchard Street, the best method of cultivating edelweiss and the best food to give a pet frog. They also had a telephone call from a rather harassed married man, whose wife was on holiday, asking for details of how to cook a joint of meat with its trimmings. 60 11 04b

Central library lending department showing assistant straightening books and reader, October 1960; CN neg H8121 (photo 231.49)

Cataloguer in administration department, 1st floor, Oct 1960; CN neg H8122 (photo 231.50)

Library assistants jacketing and labelling books in administration dept, Oct 1960; CN neg H8123 (photo 231.51)

Wheeler St lending library enquiry desk with John Franklin, October 1960 - H8121 (photo 72.73)

1960 11 07

Comberton Village College was officially opened by Henry Morris who had retired as Chief Education Officer in 1954. The buildings, particularly the hall, workshops and other practical rooms have been equipped so they may be used by young people and adults in the evenings and at weekends. It provides facilities for the countryman as good as those offered in towns and cities and they are packed each evening. The college library, in addition to serving the school, is also a branch of the county library. 60 11 07

1961 01 02

A questionnaire shows that most people think the Lion Yard area should include a concert hall, civic restaurant, hotel and assize court together with a library. This should feature a record section, an art lending department, reading room and small exhibition area. There should be a municipal crèche where children could be left while their parents shopped and a car park reserved for those who worked in the Guildhall. Half of the respondents were in favour of traffic wardens and parking meters, though some said they had no experience of them, while 81 per cent wanted a pedestrian precinct. Other

suggestions included a news cinema where people could wait in comfort for evening buses and supermarkets near the edge of the city 61 01 02a

1961 06 28

People joining Cambridge City Library will not in future have to pay one penny for each ticket taken out. The legalities of the charge, which produced about £100 annually, was 'very doubtful. The Library Committee accepted the gift of an oil painting of the Cambridge Mays by Percy Craft which will be hung in the children's library 61 06 28

1961 10 19

Cambridge Library Group re-formed – 61 10 19

1962 01 15

The establishment of a gramophone record lending library should be deferred. A scheme was proposed for the reading room at the Central Library in Wheeler Street to be closed and the junior library moved there. Then a music library would take its place. 62 01 15

1962 03 23

Cambridge Central Library – photos of readers – 62 03 23

1962 03 30

Cambridge Central Library has spent 100 years in Wheeler Street. Drastic and effective reforms took place between 1954 and 1959 to make more efficient use of staff, facilitate access to the shelves for ticket-holders and give the children their own library. Space was cleared in the reference library (formerly the reading room) to seat 47 people. Reference library staff are generally able to lay their hands on a diversity of volumes relating to every aspect of any subject almost before the reader has formulated his real requirements. Year by year the service becomes more far-reaching and the qualifications demanded of librarians become more exacting. 62 03 30

1962 05 31

The University's proposals for the future development of Cambridge are designed to enhance its character as a university town. The Lion Yard area should include a multi-purpose public hall, for which they have offered to pay half, a new public library, exhibition gallery and arts centre. There would be a regional shopping centre in the City Road area including department and chain stores with large scale car parking and the segregation of pedestrians from traffic. 62 05 31a

1962 06 25

University plans for the future of Cambridge envisage that in the Lion Yard there would be a new hall for conferences, concerts and all kinds of music with a new library, small shops, cafes and homes for 300 people. A new regional shopping centre in City Road would be free of all vehicular traffic and there could be more homes on the site than before. The housing areas which are close to the centre are also the oldest and many are in need of redevelopment. Already 4,000 people have had to leave since 1950 but the University wants to see at least as many living in these areas as were there ten years go. 62 06 25

1962 12 07

Cambridgeshire County Library service lent 622,735 books last year, more than ever before, following the abolition of the distinction between general and non-fiction readers' tickets. The numbers of readers has risen by 1,000 to more than a quarter of the population. But issues from village centres continue to decline showing the limited service is not meeting the needs of present-day readers. With the closure of so many village schools where the library is often housed and the growing scarcity of married women with time to spare, this becomes a greater problem every year, says Miss G.M. Powell, the County Librarian 62 12 07b

1963 02 09

City Librarian not allowed a new carpet, difficult conditions – 63 02 09a

1963 02 25

County mobile library service approved – 63 02 25

1963 06 06

“Tropic of Cancer” banned [2.21]

1963 06 06

Cambridge Central Library is ‘bursting at the seams’; ‘general inquiries’ should be made about completely new accommodation. The Herbert Robinson garage could be used for a record library – 63 06 06a

1963 08 07

Minutes after the opening Cherry Hinton’s new branch library by the Mayor of Cambridge, there were complaints that working men cannot get there before it closes at 7pm and it should stay open an extra hour. There has been a library of sorts for many years. Originally books were kept in a locked bookcase at the entrance to the Church of England School in High Street. It moved to Colville School in the mid-50’s. Now work has started on Newmarket Road library after which another will be constructed on Arbury Road 63 08 07b Profile of librarian, Margaret Traviss – 63 08 07c [4.4]

1963 08 27

Work starts on new Barnwell Road Library - pic – 63 08 27

1963 08 30

Librarian Kate Asbery organises reading competition – 63 08 30

1963 09 12

Eric Cave, the Cambridge City Librarian reported that book issues in August were a record high at 108,551. More people were making personal inquiries at the Reference Library, taking up a lot of time, and other work is falling into arrears; soon more staff will be needed. There should be a new central library with information bureau nearby but care needed to be taken that readers were not disturbed by people rushing about trying to find information. When a new building was acquired it would be possible to carry out some of the ideas they were at present unable to fulfil 63 09 12d

1963 10 12

Shelford Library in Woollards Lane has new look – pic - 63 10 12

1963 12 05

Ely’s new county library will be built a site in Minster Place once occupied by an SPCK Bookshop. The Royal Fine Art Commission has approved a design embodying the most up-to-date ideas. The ground floor will house adult and children’s lending rooms and a quick reference section while upstairs will be a space for lectures and projection of films together with maps, plans, pictorial and museum specimens relating to Ely. It will also serve as an information bureau for summer tourists. Ely has had a county library since 1927 with the present, inadequate part-time branch in Bray’s Lane existing in adapted premises for about 18 years. 63 12 05a

1963 12 06

The Royal Fine Art Commission has approved a design for Ely’s new county library in Minster Place. The ground floor will house adult and children’s lending rooms and a quick reference section while upstairs will be a space for lectures and projection of films together with maps, plans, pictorial and museum specimens relating to Ely. It will also serve as an information bureau for summer tourists. Ely has had a county library since 1927 with the present, inadequate part-time branch in Bray’s Lane existing in adapted premises for about 18 years 63 12 06

1963 12 12

Arbury branch library plans – perhaps with flats above – 63 12 12

1964

County Library first mobile library [3.10]

1964 01 02

Plans for a temporary information office in a caravan or sectional hut on Market Hill found little favour with councillors: it would be inaccessible because it would be surrounded by stalls or parked cars. They think the present information centre should remain in the Central Reference Library in Wheeler Street which has experienced much greater use since direction signs have been erected. There would be little demand for Sunday opening – we are not in the same position as Southend or Brighton in trying to attract people. 64 01 02

1964 01 16

Gordon Logie, the City Architect spoke of his desire to see the central area of Cambridge used for pedestrians only. Traffic conditions were ‘frightful’, especially on Saturday afternoons. “It will be impossible for everyone to drive into the centre in the future. I am afraid that most people will have to walk in from the outer fringe car parks or travel by shuttle-service public transport”, he told the Trades Council. He would like to see a new city hall and central library to replace some out-of-date shops in an attempt to make the central area more pleasant. 64 01 16

1964 02 01

St Ives library opens – 64 02 01b

1964 04 13

June Robertson a librarian at Cambridge central library – profile – 64 04 13

1964 04 24

Cambridge library service must be aware of the increasing opportunities the future is likely to bring, say City Librarian, Eric Cave. They had issued over half-a-million books for the first time in its history but there can be no complacency over the increasing usage of the libraries. The coming of Anglia television had slowed demand for books. There has been a steady increase in the number of readers using the reference library. But the number of staff changes has been too great to make the provision of a smoothly-running service possible; young trainees move on to other libraries, attracted by better working hours and higher pay 64 04 24f

1964 05 13

City libraries to introduce token charging – 64 05 13b

1964 05 28

Alderman H.R. Mallett officially opened the new branch library in Barnwell Road (Newmarket Road), nine years after it was first announced. Because of the credit squeeze the Library Committee were refused permission to raise a loan in 1955. Three years later a library was opened in a shop where it continued until now. The first book was issued to ten-year-old Susan Northfield of Priory School by City Librarian, Eric Cave 64 05 28 [4.3]

1964 05 30

A new system of issuing books is to be introduced to Cambridge libraries to reduce waiting times. During peak periods queues have built up whilst staff search for tickets. Now borrowers will be given a small plastic card in exchange for books returned and they will hand back the tokens when the new books are date-stamped on the way out. City Librarian Eric Cave expects a lot of users will find it strange at first but it will be more efficient and relieve pressure on staff 64 05 30a, b

1964 07 08

City Librarian, Eric Cave's MG car demolished a Belisha beacon. He had a past history of severe concussion after an accident in 1941 64 07 08a

1964 08 17

'Focus on Cambridge' is a new documentary film seen through the eyes of two tourists as they drift along the Cam in a punt. Made by Norman Mason-Smith of Forgeron Films it is intended for people lecturing on Cambridge or tourists wishing to take home a memento of their visit. It was filmed in Technicolor, lasts 16 minutes and is available in 16mm format for £22 10s [about £370 at today's prices]. Cambridge City Libraries have agreed to take a copy 64 08 17

1964 09 10

Newmarket Road new branch library needs extra children's books – 64 09 10

1964 10 16

Cambridge Library maintains lists of local societies. Some have grown up out of the trials of war including the Dunkirk 1940 Veterans Association, Lifeline, which aids displaced persons and the Association of Nazi Camp Survivors. Lesser-known organisations include the Tibet Society, an association of Ukrainians and the British Association of the Experiment in International Living. Then there is the Reindeer Council, the Saltire Society, a Science Fiction group and the Stephenson Locomotive Society. 64 10 16c

1964 10 22

Central Library a 'public disgrace'; is cramped but wrong to spend money now; trying to give 1964 service from 1882 building. The old rooms have pipes running through them and are full of dust. The number of readers has doubled since 1954 but wish had building to display stocks and comfortable reading conditions for borrowers – pictures of Cambridgeshire Collection (180.36) and school lending department – 64 10 22a & 64 10 21

1964 10 24

Cambridge Library is gloomiest place in Cambridge; needs redecoration; no wonder they are short staffed; who would want to work in such a depressing atmosphere – letter - 64 10 24

1964 10 30

The Isle of Ely County Library already pays the postage cost for 'talking books' for registered blind people. Now it is adding specially printed books with large clear type. They will be kept together and a collection and taken round by travelling libraries to enable readers with imperfect vision to read books which they cannot currently enjoy. The cost is no greater than for ordinary editions and the books are equally suitable for people with normal sight. 64 10 30b

1964 12 02

Record library would include 1,000 long-playing records, mostly classical music though traditional jazz would be included. Hope to start next year – 64 12 02

1964 12 10

Library service wasn't too good when Dr W.A. Munford was Librarian. Library staff shortage due pay – only 5 chartered librarians, although establishment was for 18 – 62 12 10a, c

1964 12 21

Terracotta crib scene in Central Library junior department – 64 12 21a

1964 12 21

Henry Andrews moved to Royston in 1766 and compiled Old Moore's Almanac; his portrait hangs in the reference section of Cambridge public library – feature – 64 12 21

1964 12 31

Saffron Walden Literary and Scientific Institute library was established in 1832 and in 1889 the building in King Street was given to the trustees. But increasing costs and decreasing membership mean the priceless collection of ancient books dating back to the 15th century are deteriorating. They will be given to Essex County Council for preservation. One of the conditions is that the building in King Street would be retained as a library and reading room. It is expected that the existing county library in Church Street would be moved there 64 12 31

1965 01 28

Cambridge Librarian, Eric Cave, is anxious to provide a permanent home in the central library for odd items of Cambridge interest like old books, scrapbooks, prints and photographs. He had recently received a scrapbook of the public activities of the late Ald W.L. Raynes when he was Mayor from 1931 to 1932. His executors sent them having seen a report about a similar gift from another former Mayor 65 01 28

1965 02 04

Arbury Court branch library foundations laid – photo – 65 02 04c

1965 03 05

Library books choice affect readers behaviour – Searle cartoon – 65 03 05a

1965 03 19

Cambridge public libraries seriously under staffed; only nine of the 40 are fully qualified and at least a further nine are needed to bring it up to efficient operating strength - 65 03 19d

1965 04 01

Scholars and others who wish to do research in the evenings will now be able to make use of the Cambridge reference library until nine o'clock. But there will only be one librarian on duty so it will not be possible to make use of the other facilities. Extending the hours of the lending library service could not be justified as people already had reasonable opportunity to change books, City Librarian Eric Cave said 65 04 01a

1965 04 13

Library to offer higher salaries to senior staff in bid to attract qualified librarians. Is understaffed by 12 qualified librarians and during past five years have been 65 staff changes; no shortage of junior library posts & admin but they leave for other jobs with less hours – 65 04 13b

1965 04 29

Boots the Chemist to close their Booklovers' Library after 65 years – 65 04 29e

1965 05 19

Eric Cave, City Librarian came in 1954; issues have doubled, gives talks organisations; anticipates new library – profile – 65 05 19

1965 10 22

Eric Milner wants to start special records library of everything broadcast on television or radio about Cambridge – 65 10 22b

1965 12 10

City library services viewed as Cinderella, Librarian should be provided with telephone at home for use in emergencies – 65 12 09a # c.77.4

1965 12 10

Record lending library to open, librarian appointed – 65 12 10a

1965 12 23

Children's' library nativity scenes – photo – 65 12 23a

1966 01 28

Cost to ratepayers of running city library expected to be £86,200 with income of £10,000.
Gramophone library may be postponed as music librarian resigned – 66 01 28

1966 01 30

Arbury Court branch library opened – 66 01 30; Reg Tarrant stocks shelves – 66 01 12

1966 03 11

Eric Cave interview [66 03 11]

1966 03 11

City library gramophone record library to open, 10 years after first considered. The first librarian Judith Preece. Initially only classical music will be stocked but later jazz will be added together with music from stage shows – 66 03 11a; opens – 66 03 17a

1966 03 15

Mayor opens exhibition [66 03 15]

1966 03 30

Crumbling Cambridge – lack of vitality in development such as new library and Lion Yard – 66 03 30a

1966 04 06

New City Library may contain special room for homework - 66 04 06a

1966 04 13

City gramophone library fails to attract expected users – 66 04 13a

1966 05 24

Corn Exchange may be adapted for council offices or used as library – plans – 66 05 24, 66 06 20

1966 10 13

Deputy City Librarian, Wilfred James, resigns after 12 years following dispute over salary and regrading – 66 10 13

1966 10 14

'Within our means' leader [66 10 14]

1966 11 02

Royston Brown appointed deputy librarian [66 11 02]

1967 03 01

Concern that city archives are kept under proper control. Some are University Library, some in University Registry and some in the City Library. Appointment of city archivist to be considered. Would like someone lent by Fitzwilliam Museum or University Library to put matters in order. – 67 03 01a

1967 05 06

Central Library new plans unveiled include information bureau, meeting room, music library, newsroom and reference library – 67 05 06a (photo 218.41)

1967 08 31

New Central Library 'by end of 1971', probably on three floors with lending, information bureau, schools library, music, newspaper room, reference; a further 10,000 sq feet proposed tentatively for a central archives area – 67 08 31b

1967 12 01

City council budget changes threaten libraries' books – 67 12 01

1968 08 31

Mill Road issues drop since parking restrictions [68 08 31]

1968 10 18

City Library service is not just books – valuable collections of local history, of maps, directories, playbills and a thousand other items are hidden from the public gaze; record library finally established – feature – 68 10 18, 18a

1968 12 06

Shelves soon filled with paperbacks as cannot afford hardbacks [68 12 06]

1969 05 22

Ely Library receives Civic Trust award – 69 05 22

1969 08 29

Improved tourist bureau should be in library in place children's library; this to move to reading room with papers in Reference; would answer tourist accommodation enquiries and sell slides – 69 08 29

1969 10 17

Central – could take 10 weeks to convert part into Tourist Information Centre [69 10 17]

1969 11 12

Cambridge Collection grows – 'Arbury News' magazines being added by J. Barham, is developing an S.D.I. system to inform readers; copy photos, use of books increases 50% in three years – 69 11 12

1969 12 05

Central – may get coin-operated photocopier [69 12 05]

1970 01 30

Bassingbourn parish library in parish church for 250 years sold to Universities of Cambridge and Essex. Was started in 1717 by resident and comprises 800 volumes – 70 01 03

1970 02 05

Walter Lane takes photos 1947 fen floods – to be centrepiece Cambridgeshire Collection exhibition organised by Mike Petty in Guildhall – feature – 70 02 05; exhibition sets up – Mike Petty, Alison Barker, Clare Beatty - photo – 70 02 11a (202.54)

1970 03 04

Lion Yard library might be built by Development Company instead of the city council. Ravenscroft Properties may agree to build the three-storey library because it is scheduled to go on top of a block of shops; the city would then lease the building from the company – 70 03 04

1970 04 17

Mobile library – second-hand tractor unit bought [70 04 17]

1970 04 23

Library roof leak – photo of children's library – 70 04 23; 79 09 18

1971 01 21

Mobile library commissioned 71 01 21a

1971 02 03

New mobile libraries starts in City and County libraries – feature – 71 02 03. 03a

1971 03 09

Central buildings in Wheeler Street in good repair [71 03 09]

1971 05 18

Helen Powell retires as Cambridgeshire county librarian, succeeded by Frederick Houghton, Isle of Ely county librarian [71 05 18]

1971 08 10

City Library issues soar, when Cave came in 1954 were 560,000 – 71 08 10

1971 09 22

Cambridgeshire Collection Mike Petty starts SDI scheme [71 09 22]

1971 09 24

Cambridge Chronicle microfilm could make money for city [71 09 24]

1971 10 12

Cambridgeshire Collection exhibition on River Cam in Guildhall, Mike Petty and G.R. Wilson – 71 10 12 (photo 218.60)

1971 12 03

Libraries should remain under city control following local government reorganisation, committee say – 71 12 03

1972 03 17

Mobile library 74,000 issues in first year 72 03 17

1972 04 11

Record year for city libraries 72 04 11

1972 08 22

The setting up of a full-time Cambridge tourist department is likely to be recommended to the city council. Tourism is at present looked after by the library committee. During the nation-wide local government reorganisation in 1974 responsibilities for running library services will go to the new county council. But the new District Council will obviously want to run Cambridge tourist facilities. The Library committee's Labour chairman, Coun Roger Thornely said the tourist work of the City's Libraries department was increasingly rapidly and taking up more of the department's time and added: "I believe that at times the Librarian does not see a book for about four or five days at a time"

1972 09 13

A full-time tourist officer should be appointed for Cambridge, a special meeting on tourism decided yesterday. They also agreed that a disused car park attendant's hut on the Market Square should be commissioned as a tourist information centre. The Mayor, Coun. Peter Wright suggested that voluntary workers could staff a tourist information kiosk in Market Square. The City Librarian, Mr Eric Cave, suggested that if the kiosk plan went ahead it could remain open on Sundays so that the present Sunday skeleton service at the Information bureau could be closed down.

1972 09 23

City asked to build library at Fen Road 72 07 10; turned down 72 09 23

1972 09 23

Computers will run libraries of the future – Eric Cave – 72 09 23

1972 09 23

The Mayor of Cambridge, Coun Peter Wright, last night gave an assurance that the City Council had no intention of promoting tourism at the expense of attempts to expand light industry in the city. In fact, he told the council's Library Committee, the council must encourage light industry if they were to boost tourism. "The more industry we have here the more will be the council's rates income. The council can then spend more on providing facilities for tourists, as well as their own citizens", the Mayor said. Ald Elliot Ridgeon warned that there was the danger that more tourists than ever would come to Cambridge as the result of appointing a tourist officer

1972 10 10

An 1875 bicycle made a rare appearance on the streets of Cambridge to promote Cambridge City Library's exhibition "Tourism in Cambridge" at the Small Hall of the Guildhall. Its owner, Mr J.D. Howes took it from his Regent Street shop and gave it a spin along the road before it went to the Guildhall. The third exhibition of its type to be staged by the library it puts Cambridge into its proper setting for both Fenland, county and city are covered by the various displays 72 10 10

1973 03 17

Cambridgeshire Collection may be given to District Council 73 03 17

1973 04 27

Cambridgeshire Collection to be kept in Cambridge 73 04 27

1973 09 15

Cambridge City Council and the new county council have to settle a who-pays-what dispute that could delay the opening of the city's new public library by many months. The row centres on the cost of fitting out the new library. Local government reorganisation means that the city council will disappear and their successors will not have any legal responsibility for running libraries. This will rest with the new county council. They are worried that rural area ratepayers will be saddled with the cost of a large prestige building mainly for the benefits of city residents and if they pump hundreds of thousands of pounds into it other large towns in the county will demand similar treatment 73 09 15

1973 09 27

New Central Library, no provision should be made for the Tourist Bureau, District Council recommended to deposit the bulk of the City Archives in the County Record Office and no provision for storage be made in new library. Cambridgeshire Collection to be housed, displayed and used for research purposes in the new Library at the expense of the County Council. City Library committee minute R

1973 09 28

New county will pay costs new library [73 09 28]

1973 09 28

The cost of improving and modernising the public library at Mill Road, Cambridge, has risen to £13,790 due to inflation. For a number of years the Library Committee have had a programme of improvements they hoped to make to some of their ageing branch libraries. But repeatedly the economy-conscious city council have cut back on the projects. This year they agreed that the Mill Road scheme could go ahead to brighten up and repair the buildings. But since the estimates were received inflation has taken its toll 73 09 28

1973 10 14

A Cambridge councillor told the city council meeting he hoped there would be some money left over for books after meeting the £490,000 bill for fitting out the new central library in Lion Yard. But Councillor Neville Auker said; "We have been in need of an up-to-date library in Cambridge for many years. The staff at the present library do enormously well. But for a city of Cambridge's standing the library has long been a disgrace c73 10 14

1973 10 20

A £13,000 facelift for Mill Road branch library in Cambridge has been shelved by the city council to leave their architects free to concentrate on housing schemes. The Library Committee were forced to postpone the modernisation plan after hearing that it would be caught in the Government's current economic policy to cut back local council's capital spending. Mill Road was to have been the first of three branch libraries in the city to be modernised with new lighting, decorations and layout. Those at Rock Road and Milton Road were to follow. Members agreed to contact the new Cambridgeshire County Council, who will take over libraries in April, to ask them to consider the three schemes sympathetically c73 10 20

1973 10 23

City Council Civic Affairs Committee agree retention of the Cambridgeshire Collection in the Central Library and its subsequent transfer to the new library in Lion Yard, subject to the cost of maintenance being borne by the County Council. A complete catalogue should be made as soon as possible

1973 10 31

Frederick Houghton, Cambs County librarian to retire [73 10 31]

1973 11 05

Cambridge District Board unanimously support recommendation that the Cambridgeshire Collection be retained in the Central Library and subsequently transferred to the new Library in Lion Yard.

1974 02 07

City Archives: ownership of the City Council's records would transfer to the District Council who could decide whether to retain at Guildhall or deposit in the charge of the County Record Office 74/m/17

1974 02 22

Mr Eric Cave, who has been the Cambridge city librarian, officially announced his retirement today. There have been many developments in the Cambridge library services since he was appointed in 1954. He seen three new libraries built, the introduction of mobile libraries, the opening of the record lending library, and the introduction of library services to old people's homes. He hopes to see the final completion of the fitting-out contract of the new library being built in the Lion Yard c74 02 22

1974 03 29

Cambridge city council met for the last time yesterday. It took the council about ten seconds to dispose of their formal business – approving the spending of £1,248,000 on the new central library at the Lion Yard – then they went on to spend almost two hours saying goodbye to themselves, their retiring chief officers and exchanging presents. On the last day of the month, the city council, who more or less in their present form have run Cambridge since 1836 will make way for the new Cambridge District Council.

1974 04 30

One of the most significant features of the reorganisation of local government from 1st April 1974, has been the changes in function. Cambridge city council will have no further responsibility for education, libraries, weights and measures, sewage disposal, or the domiciliary health service. The advantages claimed for the transfer of these services to larger bodies should lead to greater

specialisation, the adoption of improved methods and techniques, better levels of service and economy of scale. Time will show whether these ideals can be realised.

1974 12 12

Central - row over who owns library 74 12 12

1974 12 24

Cambridge planners are looking at the possibility of turning the central library buildings in Wheeler Street into a Civic Restaurant when the library is moved into a new building in the Lion Yard next summer. The Library buildings are the centre of a legal wrangle between the city and county council who have now taken over responsibility for public libraries. The county claim the old library building should be given to, it but the city is arguing that as the library forms part of the Guildhall complex – the council's administrative headquarters – the county has no claim. The replacement of a Civic restaurant has been a top priority with the new Labour-controlled city council since it took office nine years ago

1975 02 20

Milton has no chance of getting a branch library at the moment. Finance for such projects as new branch library buildings simply isn't available the Deputy County Librarian explained. Outline planning permission for the land at one end of a garden near Coles Road lapsed this month. Building on sites without outline planning permission is strictly embargoed by the Anglian Water Authority so Milton must put up with its part time, limited stock library which opens in the British Legion hall on two afternoons and two evenings.

1975 04 14

The Cambridgeshire library service will break down if money to run it continues to be withheld by the County Council. The warning has been given by County Librarian, Mr Royston Brown, in a report on the effects of "no growth" budgets. The report adds "demands in many areas for provision will continue to increase in the next few years and be accelerated by the current economic and social difficulties. Short of new laws being made to forbid people from attending their local libraries it is impossible to regulate the use of them" c75 04 14

1975 05 24

For the first time since it was produced almost 20 years ago a prize-winning history of Cherry Hinton is to be available for reference at libraries. The contents were compiled by the Women's Institute in 1958. But the book, hand-written and with water-colour sketches, was too fragile to be easily available. But now staff from the Cambridgeshire Collection have made three complete copies of the book. One will be at Cherry Hinton library 75 05 24

1975 08 06

Cambridge' new £1 million plus central library being built in the Lion Yard, is due to open at the end of September – three months late. The task of transferring more than 100,000 books and reorganising the library's various departments is likely to take up to a fortnight. But Librarian Andrew Armour is hoping to keep the closure of the main library down to three days to minimise inconvenience 75 08 06

1975 09 17

Over 25 years of argument, several million pounds of ratepayers' money and three years of toil what will we get? The Lion Yard development. On the first floor is a modest entrance to a building that Cambridge has desperately needed for many years ... the new library. It has three floors. The top will be used for housing the Cambridgeshire Collection. On the first floor is a children's' room where young readers can comfortably browse through their selection. The building bears about as much comparison with the old Wheeler Street library as Buckingham Palace does with the Black Hole of Calcutta 75 09 17

1975 09 26

Standards of service in Cambridge Libraries have fallen since their administration was taken over by the County Council last year, City Councillors claimed. They were reminded of the decision to allow the city's ancient records to be housed in the County Archivist's Department at Shire Hall. Counc Warren said: "It would have been even more convenient for the records to have been placed in the new library in the Lion Yard as we had intended in the first place".

1975 10 14

When the new Cambridge Central Library opens in Lion Yard it will have some of the most up-to-date individual listening booths in the country in its gramophone record section. But the booths will remain unused for the time being – because the economy conscious County Council cannot afford the £2,000 needed to equip them with cassette tapes. The booths would have enabled music lovers to listen individually to various recordings of music so they could decide which ones to choose. They would keep down noise levels and prevent disturbance to other library uses 75 10 14

1975 10 18

Never had the cherubs on top of the marble columns looked down on a scene of such noise and commotion. For years they have held sway over an atmosphere of dignified hush in the library in Wheeler Street, Cambridge. But all that changed when removal men dismantled bookcases and piled thousands of books into crates ready to go to the ultra-modern library in Lion Yard. As men stripped away its contents the room with its faded splendour and peeling yellow paint looked remarkably small. It was never easy to reach the top or bottom shelves of the tall bookcases. Anyone bold enough to crouch down and survey the low shelf inevitably collided with some other borrower standing behind c75 10 18

1975 12 05

Princess Anne, making her first official visit to Cambridge, insisted on an impromptu chat with some of the thousands of sight-seers who thronged the city centre Lion Yard shopping centre. An estimated 10,000 people packed the Market Square and stood eight deep each side of Petty Cury as she walked into the new shopping centre. She stopped to talk to the delighted shop girls who were crowding their doorways and also to the eager shoppers who pressed forward to get a closer look at her. She explained: "I am not a complete stranger here because I have been shown around the university and city unofficially by two previous students who are both fans of the old city" c75 12 05 (photo 158.74)

1976

Reference Library study area CEN neg 8887.76.82 (photo 218.54)

1976 03 03

The branch library at the Cambridge Shire Hall is to close down and will be replaced once-a-week by a visit of one of the county council's mobile libraries. The decision to close down the library – to save an estimated £6,000 a year was taken at the county budget meeting. A petition of more than 500 signatures of readers asked for the building to continue. When a vote was taken there were 25 for and 25 against and the decision was taken on the casting vote of the Chairman 76 03 03

1977

Dennis Chandler and Maurice Nauta prepare for book sale (photo 218.50)

1977 06 20

Central – new technology system 77 06 20; (photo John Fox, Reader Assistant at enquiry desk – 218.45)

1977 06 25

I managed to "steal" four books from the Cambridge Central Library in Lion Yard, just to test its new and highly complex system of checking books in and out. I just walked out with them under my arm into the street. The new system involves photographing a special ticket against the book borrowed.

But it will not prevent theft unless the manoeuvre I tried can be made more difficult. In the old library one had to pass down a very narrow passageway when taking books out, and my nerve would have failed. But in the wide open spaces of the modern library it held good.

1977 08 23

Mill and Milton Road libraries possible closure [78 08 23]

1977 08 26

A campaign has been launched against the threatened closure of the Mill Road public library, Cambridge. It library is one of six which may close because of lack of money caused by severe cutbacks in Government grants. The County Librarian, Royston Brown, said the library needed £15,000 worth of repairs – and the county council did not have that sort of money. But the Romsey area has the highest percentage of old people in the city who use it as a daily reading room because they cannot afford to buy newspapers and magazines 77 08 26

1977 09 03

City suggests return of historical records, Cambridgeshire Collection, to them [77 09 03]

1977 09 10

Mill Road closure fight reaches government level [77 09 10]

1977 10 13

Stapleford Parish Council reaffirmed that it was willing to run the village library with voluntary helpers if it would result in it being saved. The library, which occupies a room in the school, is open for eight hours a week and its one of eight threatened with closure by the County Council. But the County Librarian says this could not be considered because it would cause trouble with the trade union.

1977 12 04

Sir – some months ago Cambridge central library introduced a new computer system. The computer broke down and 250 borrowers were notified that books which they had already returned were overdue. The Electronic machine is our century's God and to suggest that a human being with ballpoint pen would be more efficient than a computer is, to those idol-worshippers, plain blasphemy. Since the Browne system was abandoned folly reigns in the pixilated Library – Mrs M. Daniels. c77 12 04

1977 12 07

Plans to save branch libraries from closure by moving careers advice offices into Cambridge central library have angered librarians. Andrew Armour said the move could lead to conditions as cramped as those in the old library in Wheeler Street. "It seems that just as we were settling down to being librarians we are back in the melting pot again". It would mean moving the children's & music libraries into the lending library with possible closure of the picture loan service, closure of the 'quick reference' section and moving the Cambridgeshire Collection into the reference library causing enormous disruption in services to readers. 77 12 07

1978 01 20

Dozens of public libraries throughout Cambridgeshire will double up as social and community centres if a pilot scheme is a success. They could be used as meeting centres, law and political 'surgeries', advice centres, or simply as places where young mothers or elderly people with time on their hands could meet and chat over cups of tea. The social and community uses would run alongside the general library function as much as possible – but would also continue after library hours. The Mill Road branch library in Cambridge, which is threatened with closure, would be an ideal site for the pilot scheme. The county council sees the dual-use project as a way of raising extra cash for buying books for the libraries, which are threatened with severe cuts because of cuts in Government grants 78 01 20

1978 03 03

No public libraries in Cambridgeshire will be closed this year – and books stocks will not be depleted – although the County Council is facing a continuing financial crisis. The council had threatened to close the Milton Road and Mill Road libraries in Cambridge, village libraries at Stapleford and Milton and two libraries in Peterborough. The threats caused storms of protest and now financial experts have discovered the council has saved £60,000 on last year's spending which can be used to buy new books. 78 03 03

1978 03 15

Robert James says villages, not central library, should have money 78 03 15

1978 09 02

Hostile public reaction to the doubled fines introduced for overdue books at Cambridgeshire libraries is forcing a rethink on the matter. Although the council is nearly £20,000 better off since the fine went up to 10p a week for each book, the library service has been hit badly. A lot of people have stopped using the libraries and staff are subjected to constant complaints from readers. Assistants have become embarrassed to ask for the large fines and staff morale has dropped. A new report now suggests the fine be cut to 5p for the first week. 78 09 02

1978 10 26

Mill Road seeks government grant for renovation 78 10 26

1978 12 11

Cambridgeshire Collection receives two major donations 78 12 11

1979 02 27

The long-awaited scheme for adding a community centre complex to the Mill Road public library in Cambridge has been given the go-ahead. It aims to inject new life into the old building which had been in danger of closure. But this sparked a furious row and after intensive public pressure the county council relented and agreed the refurbishing and extension plan as a way of keeping the building open, reducing costs and keeping everybody happy. It will become a blue-print for other dual-use projects

1979 07 18

A money-saving decision taken more than a year ago looks like paying off much more than anyone expected – and all because of the oil crisis. Councillors decided to invest in an electrically –driven mobile library, the first of its kind in the country, to serve parts of Cambridge which were affected when the old Shire Hall library was closed down for economy reasons. It cost £2,000 more than a petrol-driven version but will bring big savings in operating costs. If the experiment is a success more will be bought to replace the ageing and expensive petrol-driven fleet.

1979 07 25

Cambridgeshire county council took a step towards the transport of the future when it brought into service the country's first electric mobile library. One of the largest electric road vehicles to go into commercial service, it was built by Hyrotechnick of Toft and is based on an electric travelling shop which has been successful in Holland. It is powered by four independent motor-drive systems on the rear wheels and has a speed of 12½ miles an hour, suitable for its task in the city. A second one on order will be faster with a speed of around 40 mph CEN 25.7.1979

1979 09 17

The mobile library being used while Cambridge's Mill Road library is being repaired has received a parking ticket while operating outside the building. It has now moved to Great Eastern Street on the other side of the railway bridge. Now there are fears that its isolation and lack of electricity will force its closure, leaving thousands of Romsey residents without a library. The police action has angered Cambridge councillors; Coun Sweeney said: "I have asked the City Surveyor if he could get a pot of

black paint and paint out the yellow lines so the library can remain there. It is no use moving to Great Eastern Street because that area too is earmarked for double yellow lines”

1980 02 27

Duke of Edinburgh opens Lion Yard law courts, visits Library [80 02 27]

1980 03 21

Central installs computerised catalogue etc [80 03 21]

1980 04 19

Mill Road Library, Cambridge, which faced closure three years ago, has been given a new lease of life with a £30,000 facelift. During the five-month renovation work the library staff operated from temporary mobile quarters, which on one occasion collected a parking ticket. The library includes a new community meeting room in place of the old reading room. County councillor Jean Ganczarski who protested against the planned closure said; “It is very good to think the building has now got a new life” 80 04 19b

1980 05 22

Cambridgeshire County Council may soon own the largest fleet of big electrically-powered library vehicles in the world. An experiment started a year ago has proved so successful that the Library Service now wants to dispose of its entire fleet of diesel and petrol-powered vehicles and go electric altogether. The new vehicles would be twice as fast as the present 17 mph vehicle which has proved to be at least £1,000 a year cheaper to run than the others and been free from breakdowns. 80 05 22a

1980 06 27

People busy borrowing books may not be aware that tomorrow will mark the 125th anniversary of the free public library service in Cambridge. In 1855 the job of librarian attracted a variety of applicants, amongst them a retired stage-coach driver but a 22-year-old booksellers’ assistant, John Pink, was appointed librarian and held it until he died 51 years later. Responsibility for running the service passed from the city to the county council in 1974 and the present building in Lion Yard opened in 1975. 80 06 27

1980 09 10

A move to put Cambridgeshire libraries under the control of the education committee was blocked by county councillors. The Hay Report had suggested the library service should join with community education. But the education bureaucracy was already too large and needed trimming. “We have one of the finest library services in the country and no-one with any common sense will see that destroyed”, a Peterborough councillor said 80 09 10

1981 02 12

A 10-year plan for Milton will see space for another 1,300 houses and 60 acres set aside for industry. Milton was chosen because it has outstanding road links, the potential for rail freight, good public transport, the availability of building land because of the new roads and the proposed development of the country park. There may be a substantial supermarket and the council must be urged to provide a permanent branch library. When completed its population will have more than doubled. 81 02 12 & a

1981 03 04

Mill Road more books borrowed, but fewer books 81 03 04

1981 04 24

The county librarian has criticised a pamphlet entitled ‘Where have all the new books gone?’ which attacks councils for cutting back on library spending. A new report says Cambridgeshire has reduced library provision by 15% but Brendan Dwyer says spending has risen by 14% although the high increase in the price of books does make it difficult to provide as many as previously. 81 04 24b & c

1981 09 18

The much-heralded fleet of electrically-powered mobile libraries with which Cambridgeshire County Council had hoped to save a small fortune in energy costs has been scrapped. The first vehicle was banned from public roads because of braking defects, the second has been returned to the manufacturers after unsuccessful attempts at improving range and speed. Now the remaining eight vehicles have been cancelled and a diesel-powered mobile library will be bought instead. 81 09 18b

1981 01 18

The Cambridge area had 17 royal visits last year; people get so many chances to see royalty that they become quite blasé. Prince Philip went to the Central Library in Lion Yard after he'd opened the new magistrates' courts. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon and the library was full of people peering at books, but nobody took any notice of him. Prince Philip liked that: he could see the library functioning as it normally functions. 82 01 18a

1981 09 21

Makers of mobile libraries hit back over faults – 81 09 21

1981 09 23

Silence greets shock report on electric libraries – 81 09 23

1981 12 03

Spending on Cambridgeshire libraries will be cut next year, despite a warning from the County Librarian that much of the stock is poor in both physical condition and subject coverage and the number of books available to the public has already been reduced. But the replacement for St Neots library was a clear priority as the present one was inadequate for a growing town and to postpone the scheme would be 'bad business' 81 12 03

1982 03 11

Chris Marsh replaces Maurice Nauta as Children's Librarian 89 03 11

1982 04 20

Newmarket Library is the first in the area to run a video lending library with 200 cassettes on offer at £1.95 per night. But Andrew McCulloch of Arbury Court who rents 1,000 films says although people have now got a video, or a thinking of getting, one business is not booming. An advertiser in the News offers 'adult' films for sale at £30, sent out in plain cardboard boxes. 82 04 20b

1982 05 20

New service of information on registered firms 82 05 20

1983

Lending library seen from void of Reference Department, CEN neg 815.83.32 (photo 218.53)

Cambridgeshire Collection enquiry desk with Mike Petty, Stella Bachelor and ... CEN neg 938.83.34 (photo 218.55)

1983 02 10

Up to 20,000 people are expected to visit the first-ever two-day book sale being held in Cambridge's central library at Lion Yard. Thousands of books are going on sale at prices ranging from 10p to £25. They are either out of date or no longer suitable for the rough and tumble of public library use. Previous sales have raised thousands of pounds. 83 02 10

1983 03 10

Mike Petty, Cambridgeshire Collection Librarian, 10 Mar 1983 CEN neg 938.83.33 (photo 218.56)

Mike Petty with Sara Payne in Cambs Collection - photo used in 'Down Your Street' (photo 218.57)

1983 04 06

Colonel Guennadi Primakov, one of three Russians ordered out of Britain for spying, openly used the Cambridge Lion Yard Library for part of his intelligence-gathering work. He consulted newspaper cuttings files on civil defence in the Cambridgeshire Collection. At that time, in 1980, Defence Secretary Francis Pym had announced the decision to site Cruise missiles at Molesworth prompting 2,000 opponents of the scheme to march in protest. Librarians noticed him photocopying the files and consulted local police, but they said it was a matter for Scotland Yard. 83 04 06

1983 12 30

Ratepayers could be more than £40,000 worse off because a much-heralded 'money-saving' scheme has collapsed. Three years ago the council decided to buy a fleet of 12 electrically-powered mobile libraries to serve outlying rural areas. But from the start things went wrong. Faults developed and the council became involved in a long legal battle with the suppliers who have since ceased trading. Now councillors are trying to dispose of three electric vehicles 83 12 30 p5

1984 03 17

On Saturdays 3,000 books arrive and depart from the lending department of the central library in Lion Yard. But there is more to the library than that including 100,000 reference books and a stock of 850 paintings and pictures which borrowers can take home. There are 19 staff in the lending, music and children's department with another dozen in the various reference services. When things are tight the last thing to go is service to the public, said Andrew Armour, the Librarian. Library use continues to increase, funds remain tight, staff levels stay level but new technology skills should enable them to both maintain and improve the service 84 03 17 (photo Teletext computer 218.42) (photo computer terminal with Steve Foulger, Reference Librarian 218.48) (photo Chris Heaton, Reference Librarian reading Times on microfilm reader 218.49)

1984 07 25

County library HQ moves from Huntingdon to Cambridge 84 07 25

1985 03 01

Cambridgeshire Collection Librarian Mike Petty address conference Sardinia [85 03 01]

1985 08 11

Swavesey villagers are outraged at plans to shut their library and replace it with a van. The library is the centre of the community with a turnover of at least 2,500 books a week; old people's clubs arrange meetings when it is open so that elderly members can call in. Even people from the surrounding villages use it. The protests started when it was discovered that village college governors had decided that the library would have to move out of rented rooms there because of a desperate shortage of classrooms. If the public library were to go the school could have more accommodation at no extra expense. But campaigners say "We won't let this happen. We have got to keep our library in the village". 85 08 13

1985 09 04

Swavesey library closure opposed – 85 09 04

1985 09 23

Swavesey library has been saved thanks to outraged villagers who lobbied Cambridgeshire County Council to prevent its closure. The protest started when governors at the school wanted to move it out because of a shortage of space. 230 people attended a public meeting objecting to any attempt to shut the library which lends at least 2,500 books a week. Now councillors have backed them by 14 votes to two. Campaigners are overjoyed and others in a similar situation will realise that if you try, you can win, they say 85 09 23

1985 11 07

Central caretaker Leslie Collins retires [85 11 07] (photo including Andrew Armour the library manager, Rosemary Mumford 218.47)

1986

Reference Library staff showing Jon Anderson, Jo Phelps, Christine Norman and Mervyn Capel CEN neg 4423 86 8 (photo 218.58)

1986 03 18

Two city libraries are again under threat of closure, only years after a successful survival battle. Mill Road library is on the wrong side of the railway bridge while Milton Road library is only half-a-mile from Arbury Court. But Councillor Janet Jones describes the plans as disgraceful and says many children and elderly people will be devastated if Milton Road is closed. However Bar Hill and Milton villages are fast-growing and need some library facilities, a report says. 86 03 18

1986 04 22

Campaigners protesting against the threatened closure of Mill Road and Milton Road branch libraries are to lobby councillors when they visit the buildings. A report that says libraries are now in the wrong situation to give the best service to the community. But Mill Road local councillor Anne Campbell said "It is an essentially facility for the area. Many of the present users cannot visit the central library in Lion Yard". 86 04 22

1986 04 25

Two Cambridge libraries threatened with closure are facing their second crisis in eight years. The axe first loomed over Milton Road and Mill Road branches in 1977 but they were saved together with others in Milton and Stapleford. Now a report says they are old and in the wrong position to provide the best service. But Cambridgeshire Labour councillors have started a campaign to save them and Alliance councillors are organising a petition against closure. 86 04 25

1986 05 27

Cambridgeshire Collection given Jack Overhill books [86 05 27]

1986 09 18

The much-heralded fleet of electrically powered mobile libraries, with which the County Council had hoped to save a small fortune in energy costs, has been scrapped. One vehicle has been banned from public roads because of braking defects, a second returned to the manufacturers for unsuccessful attempts at improving range and speed. The remaining order for eight vehicles has been cancelled and now the county council and manufacturers are locked in a legal battle. New diesel-powered libraries will be bought to keep the service running. 86 09 18 manufacturers blame council indecision – 86 09 21. Councillors hear report – 86 09 23a

1987 03 07

An Alliance county councillor's plans to close Milton Road public library and sell off the site for redevelopment has staggered his party colleagues. He claims the closure together with another in Lt Downham and two in Peterborough would be in accordance with plans to 'rationalise' the number of libraries. But other councillors say they will start a campaign to keep them open. Robert Rhodes James, MP, has also vowed to fight 'tooth and nail' to save Milton Road library from closure 87 03 07, 12a

1987 03 13

Milton Road library is not to be closed – 87 03 13

1987 04 06

Philip Marriot, children's librarian (photo 218.46)

1988 04 08

Central Library lending department to close for reorganisation and computerised book issuing programme due in two years time – 88 04 08

1988 04 21

When Margaret Badcock set up the new Cambridge tourist desk at the back of the library in 1971 there were three people who ran private guiding services. Now there are 150 official blue badge guides who have passed difficult examinations and are fluent in a second language. Then the University Arms was asking less than £6 for a double room with breakfast – it is now £57 - while the Sorrento Hotel in Cherry Hinton Road charges about £40 and the Belle Vue Guest House in Chesterton Road between £19 and £22, the average for a double room in a private house. 88 04 21b

1988 04 29

Alan Bennett came to Cambridge in 1953 as part of his National Service to learn Russian with a view to getting into the Intelligence Service. He was based at Douglas House in Trumpington Road and stayed in digs at Foxton and Newnham Terrace. He remembers many hours doing his work in the city library opposite the Corn Exchange. It left him with an abiding affection for Cambridge though now, he says, it has lost a lot of its simple charm and the traffic problems seem as bad as anywhere. 88 04 29a

1988 05 06

Library-users could be charged under new Government proposals – 88 05 06c

1988 07 19

Central Library asbestos scare, ceiling – 88 07 19

1988 12 01

Cambridgeshire Collection produces sepia pictures for sale [88 12 01]

1989

Lending library showing paperback racks (photo 218.51, 200.82)

1989 03 03

Jack Overhill was known by many people as an author and broadcaster – giving 55 talks for the BBC and publishing three books. But most people will remember him as a keen swimmer. The founder of the Granta Swimming Club, he took a daily dip in the Cam for more than 60 years. After leaving school at 14 he followed his father's trade of shoemaker and in the 1920s set up one of the country's first football pools coupons. "His diaries and the dramatized novels he wrote represent a most important history of backstreet Cambridge in the 1920s and 30s", said Cambridgeshire Collection Librarian, Mike Petty 89 03 03b

1989 03 21

Libraries of the Future conference envisages co-operation between county and university libraries – 89 03 21a

1989 04 04

A high-tech computer system set to revolutionise Cambridgeshire's 15 main libraries has gone on line. Chief librarian Brendan Dwyer checked out the first book on the 'Cambook' system at Arbury Court. It will provide instant information about books on loan and a faster reservation system. "Pioneering the latest technology will help us to continue to offer a faster efficient service throughout the 1990s", he said 89 04 04a

1989 07 10

Cambridge Library is to close for two weeks as part of a computerisation programme to streamline efficiency. It will replace the system installed in 1976. But the Cambridgeshire Collection will be open as normal 89 07 10a

1989 08 03

VCH vol.9 published, exhibition in Cambridgeshire Collection – 89 08 03

1989 08 23

Central Library to close for two weeks as part of computerisation programme; plans to rebuild the entrance postponed as would result in unsatisfactory entrance to a major public building 89 08 23

1989 09 07

Cambridge Central Library is closed while details of every book in stock are fed into an ambitious new computer programme. When complete staff will be able to pinpoint exactly who has borrowed which book and when it is due back. That was the information that was recorded on handwritten ledgers when it opened in 1855. Open access, allowing readers to select their own books by browsing the shelves was introduced in 1922. Now on an ordinary weekday 2,500 people call at the library in Lion Yard 89 09 07

1989 09 19

Part of the front entrance to Cambridge Central library is to be turned into a shop and sold off as part of the council's policy of disposing of surplus assets. The staircase will be redesigned with electric sliding entrance doors. The county council, which owns the prime site, has given itself planning permission for the new shops against the wishes of the city council who think it will destroy a large space which serves useful community purposes. 89 09 19c

1989 10 06

John Franklin, Administrative Assistant, retires from Cambridge library after 45 years – 89 10 06 (photo 218.44)

1989 11 09

Coun David Wolfe is to launch a campaign to stop the closure of Mill Road library as part of a County Council economy drive. Cambridge was one of the first towns in the country to have a local free library service. Mill Road library has served the community for 92 years and is a valuable resource. With the opening of city council housing schemes at Ditchburn Place and Thoday Street increasing the numbers of elderly people and young families moving into the area it is a particularly convenient service, he says – 89 11 09c

1989 11 25

Mill Road library – public to have say on closure, and Lt Downham 89 11 25

1989 11 29

Bar Hill library to open 89 11 29

1989 12 22

Mill Road library reprieved from closure – 89 12 22a

1990 03 31

Reg Tarrant retires 90 03 31

1990 04 05

Libraries budget cut hits novels – 90 04 05a

1990 04 30

Mill Road Friends launch campaign to stop any new threats to close 90 04 30

1990 06 01

Cambridge Central Library to close for two weeks in July for alterations and repairs including controversial refurbishment of the entrance foyer, which is to be divided into a separate retail unit. The City objected saying it would deprive the community of an important space. A wall will be built to separate the new foyer from the proposed shop and electric doors introduced. 90 06 01

1990 07 02

Central closed two weeks for repairs 90 07 02

1990 07 26

Cambridgeshire Collection Librarian Mike Petty presented with Library Association T.C. Farries 'Librarian of the Year' award 90 07 26

1990 08 21

Libraries highlighted as part review – 90 08 21a

1990 11 09

Rock Road row over library future 90 11 09

1990 11 14

Brendan Dwyer, head of libraries, retires 90 11 14

1990 11 16

Massive review library service 90 11 16a

1991 02 23

Official report on libraries implies branch libraries in danger of closure; claim this a mistake, apologies – 91 02 23a

1991 02 28

Villages need libraries but money is short, says Andrew Armour – 91 02 28a

1991 02 28

Prof Geoffrey Martin, ex-keeper of Public Records and Mike Petty look through facimile of the Domesday Book on exhibition of reprint at Cambs Collection, 18 Feb 1991, 91 0 28b (photo 218.43)

1991 05 13

Mike Hosking appointed head customer services, Paul Martin head development & support 91 05 13

1991 07 18

Andrew Armour, Cambridge division librarian, takes early retirement, replaced by Chris Heaton 91 07 18

1993

Cambridgeshire Collection receives Dorothy McCulla award

1995

Mike Hoskins, Head of Libraries and Heritage & Brian Smith, Director Libraries & Heritage – photo (218.36); CEN neg 1202.95.13

1995 01 23

Rock and Arbury libraries fight closure 95 01 23

1995 06 09

Mill Road library to close along with Downham, Wittering & Fletton 95 06 09

1995 07 29

Mill Road, Anne Campbell MP, campaign 95 07 29

1995 08 02

Mill Road Friends group launched 95 08 02

1995 10 14

Central library needs £500,000 anti-fire initiative to safeguard Cambridgeshire Collection 95 10 14

1995 12 05

Mill Road celebrates 100 years 95 12 05

1996 03 14

Mill Road library offered to city by county 96 03 14

1996 03 22

Martyn Wade, Library Manager, posing in Lending Library (photo 218.40, 200.94)

1996 04 01

Central reduces opening hours 96 04 01

1996 04 01

Mill Road closes, campaigners out in force 96 04 01 (photo 218.38, 200.96)

1996 04 08

Mill Road bid to reopen 96 04 08

1996 07 02

Mill Road residents plan to rescue [96 07 02]

1996 08 10

Open University student research published on CD-Rom, launched in Cambridgeshire with Sue Oosthuizen 96 08 10 (photo 218.37)

1996 09 16

Mill Road windows boarded up [96 09 16]

1996 10 10

Mill Road traders fight Wintercomfort scheme [96 10 10]

1996 12 16

'Libraries lose a leading light': Mike Petty takes early retirement from Cambridgeshire Collection, succeeded by Chris Jakes; management chiefs pledge to maintain staffing levels and try to develop the archive; as result cutbacks four libraries have closed and opening times of branches reduced 96 12 16

1996 12 21

Head of Cambs Collection to retire ... to be consultant 96 12 21

1996 12 30

Chris Jakes, new principal librarian of Cambridgeshire Collection publishes 'Cambridge in Old Photographs' 96 12 30

1997 01 01

'Farewell to courteous, helpful Mike' – Margaret French letter – 97 01 01

1997 01 06

'The man behind a great collection' – appreciation by John Durrant, Mayor of Cambridge 97 01 06

1997 01 20

'Making sure the past is safe for the future'; Mike Petty interview at home, Librarian of the Year 1989, begins News column, lectures; reorganisation in the air and wanted to leave Cambridgeshire Collection at its peak; management says are considering risk management following Norwich fire and Collection will stay where it is and will not be split up 97 01 20

1997 01 27

'Collection is stuff of real history' – Collection has a place amongst the best – Mike Bowyer 97 01 27

1997 04 26

'Award winner's final chapter': Mike Petty retirement send-off ... 1990 T.C. Farries award, 1993 Dorothy McCulla award, Hon Fellow APU 97 04 26

1997 04 26

Mill Road protest a year after closure 97 04 26

1997 07 03

Central Library to close for 8 months for fire safety work 97 07 03

1997 10 20

Mill Road – Henry Tribe book on 'My University' 97 10 20

1997 11 04

Central Library 60 new computer terminals to be fitted 97 11 04

1997 11 05

Mill Road to become Indian Cultural Association centre 97 11 05

1998 05 11

'Archive will be moved for safety': world-renowned Cambridgeshire Collection to be rehoused on second floor; is used by students, families and academics ... one of the best of its kind, says Mike Hosking, Head of Libraries. Will make it safer and more accessible to the many thousands who use it every year 98 05 11

1998 06 22

'Local studies service to stay': is important part of library service, will develop and fire protection work with coincide with reorganisation of Central Library 98 06 22

1998 07 22

Milton Road to be closed for work to be carried out 98 07 22

1998 11 30

'Refurbishment work on library gets under way'; principally to rehouse Cambridgeshire Collection and improve layout of the library 98 11 30

1998 12 23

'Ideal site for archive' – already a need for more space so why not a new purpose-built local history centre housing Cambridgeshire Collection and provide space for other organisations with collections of historical documents; ideal space the area undeveloped land nearby – letter 98 12 23

1999 01 13

'Building work brings new chapter to library' – will take four months with final move in August, secures future Cambridgeshire Collection 99 01 13

1999 01 28

'Getting to KnowUK': unique internet-based service from Chadwyck-Healey enables users to search information on all aspects of UK 99 01 28 (photo Chris Heaton, [unknown] and Martyn Wade at computer at launch - 218.39)

1999 07 21

'Move to protect valuable archive': Cambridgeshire Collection being relocated, improve layout of technology services on second floor 99 07 21

1999 08 13

'Anti-fire device makes library archives safer': catalogues on database, paid for by £500,000 from Government to upgrade information technology 99 08 13 (photo 201.01)

1999 09 04

'Collection's new home': housed in a specially designed environment on second floor with 2,500 linear metres of shelving giving enough storage space for 20 years growth; study area also moved, providing more seating, more displays and books for loan. The book and illustrations catalogues have been transferred to a database available on internet 99 09 04

1999 11 11

Mill Road library leased by Indian community and cultural association for 25 years 99 11 11

2000 07 05

Central Library closes two weeks for security and refurbishment 2000 07 05, 200 07 31

2000 08 08

Central Library computer system crashed 2000 08 08

2001 01 12

'25-year site is just the ticket': Cambridgeshire Collection celebrates 25 year in Lion Yard; Collection has 50,000 books, 4,000 maps & 400,000 prints and negatives; during 2000 nearly 800 items added; 2001 01 12 & a (photo 139.81, 139.85, 140.06)

2001 10 09

Central Library café opened [2001 10 09]

2004 01 01

Cambridgeshire Collection on second floor, shows readers, open shelf stock and computer terminals (photo 218.52)

2006 09

Central Library to shut for 15 months for refurbishment, announcement Sept

2007 01 18

'End of an era for city library': 15 months of disruption in £7.5m redevelopment; Collection moves to Milton Road library – 2007 01 18

2008 03 25

'Plans for new home to house county history ditched': new heritage centre within CB1 development dropped; at present Cambridgeshire Collection in storage at various locations and can only be accessed from Milton Road library. 2008 03 25

2008 10 18

'Mould threat to county's heritage': archive facilities at Shire Hall condemned; records are in risk of damage. 2008 10 18

2009 09 26

Closed library a monumental fiasco for city' – rebuilding work due complete in September having taken twice as long as expected, 2¾ years 2009 06 26

2009 10 09

'17,389 visit new library in seven days': opened on 29th September after £7.5 million rebuild and refurbishment; transformed with old storage and office space cut away and new floor space created by filling in a void between the first and second floors. Old entrance removed to first floor. New Mediateque giving access to British Film Archive & facilities for Cambridgeshire Collection. Was due to open May last year but delayed due to serious structural problems with original 1970s building. 'A truly fantastic new library with range of extended facilities and services ... in premier league of public libraries' 2009 10 09a

2009 11

Big Bright ... verdict on new central library – 'Your Cambs' Nov 2009

2010 01 01

Cambridge library best in county; photo Michael Wyatt with books (218.35), 2010 01 01

2010 03 30

'Cuts protesters to turn out as Princess Anne opens library', the library should not be used to balance the books, it is a resource centre 2010 03 30

2010 10 07

'Central library chaos is not good reading': bungled rebuild, finished 18 months late by second contractor, Coulson, after first one sacked 2010 10 07

2011 03 17

'Recouping losses on library building could take time': £500,000 may not be reclaimed; library services face need to save £3.2 million over five years – 2011 03 17

2011 09 15

Archives centre plan for Shire Hall military bunker – shelter under Castle Court built in 1980s would make excellent centre; Shire Hall basement deteriorating – 2011 09 15

2014 09 27

My first job ... when the council wanted to knock down the Guildhall in the early 90s I was hired for a day to photocopy some of the central library archives on the history – Julian Huppert MP

2014 11 13

Time flies ... and county archive has pictures to prove it: selection of more than 14,000 images in Shire Hall archive 20 15 people maintain collections – 2014 11 13

2015 01

Proposed Cambridge Library Enterprise Centre; introduction and background with plans of proposals
2015 01

2015 01 15

Anger at plans to relocate archives: a scheme to move the Cambridgeshire Collection from Lion Yard library to Ely as part of County Archives criticised 2015 01 15

2016 03

Pegasus Group planning statement regarding Strikes Bowling, Ely change of use for archives

2015 03 14

'Key archives deserve better', no need to move Cambs Collection – John Green – 2015 03 14

2015 03 16

Enterprise hub plan for library – county to team up with Kora to provide cutting edge business and learning services on third floor – 2015 03 16

2015 03 24

Chris Jakes wins McCulla Memorial Prize, worked for 40 years to provide one of best local studies collections in country – 2015 03 24

2015 03 25

'Archives must not be moved' – Collection is in fire-proof store – Reg Tarrant letter – 2015 03 25

2015 04 03

'Keep our city collection here' – is unique, plans coincide with proposals for commercial enterprise zone – Sara Payne letter – 2015 04 03

2015 04 15

Library protest forces delay to enterprise plan – petition gets decision reviewed – 2015 04 15

2015 04 21

Libraries are not for profit; report says private company Kora is interested in making money out of public spaces – letter from Daniel Carter – 2015 04 21

2015 04 21

Archives must not be moved: Cambridgeshire Collection covers villages south of Cambridge, could not have produced books on Fowlmere without it – Les Price letter 2015 04 21

2015 04 22

Pegasus group statement on planning application for change of use of Strike's bowling alley, Ely

2015 04 22

The Ely Centre: information update for archive and local studies stakeholders; environment conditions at Shire Hall not suitable; Strikes building is suitable for conversion; Cambridgeshire Collection store not entirely compliant with modern standards ... plan to move much of Collection and Local Studies team to Ely leaving some stock

2015 04 23

'Benefits' to archive move: relocating the Cambridgeshire Archives will 'provide benefits' to Ely and area says planner. County plans to move archives from Shire Hall basement to Strikes Bowling Alley – 2015 04 23

2015 04 23

'Good location': Strikes site could be available on 250 year lease ... keen to move its priceless archive collection to somewhere safe, secure & accessible ... to spend £3/4 million – letter Bill Hunt – 2015 04 23 EWN

2015 04 23

Store Archives in Nuclear bomb shelter under the ECDC council offices or in Old Court House – letter from D. Jackson 2015 04 23 EWN

2015 04 30

Ely is actually rather remote: proposed archives and local studies centre is not easily accessible to many county residents – Janet Morris letter 2015 04 30

2015 05 01

'Don't move the archives': concern that Cambs Collection move to Ely; letter George Ginn 2015 05 01

2015 05 08

'Library plans get furious response' - hostile opposition to plans to change third floor into enterprise centre; also questions on move of Cambs Collection to Ely – 2015 05 08

2015 05 14

Cambridgeshire Archives and local studies at Ely: what is the difference, why os Strikes bowling alley suitable, why move the Cambridgeshire Collection too, why haven't you consulted – notes by Archive and Local Studies Manager; also statement

2015 06 01

'MP takes a stand over library plan' – Daniel Zeichner condemns plans for third floor library – 2015 06 01

2015 06 02

Council 'out of control' on eve of library D-day – 400 private meetings held with Kora -2015 06 02

2015 06 02

Rethink city library plans: third floor desks and study area are usually fully occupied – Green Party letter questioning enterprise centre – 2015 06 02

2015 06 02

Cambridgeshire Collection future has unfortunately become associated with Enterprise Centre proposals; some users convinced the proposal to move the Collection to join Cambridgeshire Archives in Ely is due to scheme. In reality the plan has long been as aspiration ... was intended as part of previously abandoned options to relocate the service to a new building at Arbury Camp and Foster's silo site at Cambridge station. Proposal to integrate the service was welcomed by councillors in September 2014 but given strength of public feeling separate consultation on the location of the Collection should be undertaken – County Highways & Community Infrastructure Committee minute

2015 06 03

Outrage as enterprise library plan approved: private company Kora will take over 60% of library third floor to create a hub for networking and business advice 2015 06 03

2015 06 06

Twist in library enterprise plan – Kora negotiator banned from being company director; disqualification discovered by political blogger – 2015 06 06

2015 06 10

Fresh review of Central Library enterprise plan after revelations that Kora managing director has been banned from being director 2015 06 10

2015 06 15

Strikes still open – bought by county council for archives centre; Collection will also move – 2015 06 15

2015 06 27

Enterprise centre plan abandoned amid outcry; council do extraordinary U-turn on Kora proposals 2015 06 27

2015 07 25

Library review to be done in-house: probe into failed plans for an enterprise centre at Cambridge Central Library will be carried out internally; plans scrapped in wake of fierce public outcry 2015 07 25

2015 07 29

Milton Road library may be torn down and rebuilt as a new community hub – 2015 07 29

2015 09 03

Cost of Ely archive centre has rocketed by 55 per cent in less than a year: now £6.198M – 2015 09 03 ES

2015 09 19

Archives move to Strikes, Ely, will cost £6m, up from £4m; should be kept with Cambridgeshire Collection councillor says

2015 09 23

Central Library plans ‘correct’: investigations into Cambridge Central Library Enterprise Centre scheme by Kora say no case to answer

2015 10 08

Archives move is going ahead – council chiefs pressing ahead with plans to relocate the County Archives to Ely; costs have spiralled; concern that Cambridgeshire Collection could move too 2015 10 08

2015 10 29

‘Find safer place for archives’ – site on flood zone adjacent to petrol filling-station, builder’s yard and industrial complex – Janet Fairweather letter – 2015 10 29

2016 03 13

With threat of losing the third floor of the library to commercial office space 30 attended a brainstorming session – longer hours etc. But hours have been reduced, charges for book reservations increased ... seem hell-bent on making the existing service less convenient and more expensive – ‘Susan in the City’ feature 2016 03 13

2016 11

Cambridgeshire Archives newsletter; in April 2016 a new site in Ely acquired for modern archive store; now agreed but search should be carried out to ensure it best value for money